TROOPER TALES

BY
WILL
LEVINGTON
COMFORT

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TROOPER TALES

A SERIES OF SKETCHES

OF

The Real American Private Soldier

BY

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

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To the great outer wall of a great nation,
THE REGULAR ARMY MAN,
who does what he is told, silently, ingloriously,
surely, this volume of cavalry sketches
is dedicated by one who lingered
with you for a little while, and
knows, therefore, how
great you are.

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INTRODUCTION.

Civilians write army stories. Commissioned officers write army stories. Enlisted men laugh at the former because the author is remote and they cannot bruise him. Had they the power to lure the civilian into their midst they would shortly drill him full of real army coloring, and his effusions would be shrunken with lean, beautiful wisdom ever after. But, since he keeps his personality removed, the soldiers can only laugh.

The literary efforts of commissioned officers are discussed in whispers by the enlisted men, because they are only enlisted men, while the commissioned officers are old and young gods, who become very masterful beings when criticised audibly by men from the ranks.

But no one can deny that the army stories of commissioned officers are full of officers' instinct, and officers' fleckless uniforms, and clubs, and ladies. The enlisted men who emerge upon these idyllic pages are sort of baneful and temporary necessities, as are warts. There are orderlies with square shoulders and brick faces, whose vocabularies consist of "Yes, sir," and "No, sir," uttered in disfigured English. In the stories of commissioned officers the enlisted man is a thing for duty, not for speech —a thing to fight if necessary, not to think—an animal whose pastimes are cards, canteens and colored ladies—

whose realm does not embrace an aptness in the softer arts. In short, he is an atom of no consequence.

I realize that, in writing thus, I hurl from me all dreams of ever being a private soldier again—at least, under the name I used in my last enlistment. It is pathetic for a writer who might be a soldier to starve just because he is frank.

The army stories which civilians write have none of this ungovernable officer's instinct. Corporals and colonels become chummy in such tales. A trooper and a troop commander wax convivial together at the canteen. And that is why enlisted men who read all army stories grin unfeelingly.

The young man who scans this volume of cavalry stories and enlists afterward will probably make a good soldier, because he must be a very reckless young man. The enclosed choice cuts of wisdom were drilled and pounded into the author, and the wisdom which leaves tooth marks behind is not superficial.

And yet the man does not exist who has once soldiered who does not yearn sometimes to again be a blue atom in the great blue mass which makes the backbone of Uncle Sam's fighting bottom—when it comes to a show down.

The cactus and alkali of the Southwest blows about in a couple of these yarns, because I "soldiered" there. The flies and fever of a Southern army camp crawl about in a couple of others because I "soldiered" there. A number of the yarns are full of the groans and drug odors of an army hospital, because I was fortunate enough to get

out of there alive. Some of the stories are spattered with the mud of Porto Rican hills, and are dark brown from the grisly pressure of Cuban sunshine—I left friends (and I hope no debts) in both places. Only a few others remain. These are yellow with guard-house coloring, because I "soldiered"—well, all good soldiers have served time.

It would arouse suspicion to declare that the accompanying yarns are all true, but I'll swear that I tried to make pictures of real American cavalrymen and their troop horses—and the pictures were made mostly between bugle-calls. I have tried to show that there are *men* in the ranks of Uncle Sam's horsemen—wild, incorrigible, splendid men!

If I have made an inglorious fizzle of the task—well, I have "soldiered" in vain.

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT.

The Recruit in the Black Cavalry.

THE
RECRUIT IN THE BLACK CAVALRY.

What his real name was, nobody remembered. It could be found somewhere in the troop-books. Because he could sing like a woman, the boys in the Black Horse troop called him "Sadie." There are two colored cavalry regiments in Uncle Sam's service. Both showed what great black demons they could be last summer in the hills back of Santiago.

A train containing part of one of these regiments stopped in Tampa for a few minutes near a white cavalry camp. It is a wonder that there was no blood shed. There were many men from the South in the ranks of the white troops. They were in a frenzy of rage because the darkeys were under orders for the front, while they were being slowly broiled under the canvas of a torrid camp. A month later, many of those same darkey cavalrymen were brought back. They had been to the front. They had heard the song of the Mauser. Many times the song had ended in a grunt from some sandy, sticky throat, and a hero was made. The wounded cavalrymen in the hospital train were deliriously happy. The battle fever fires one's blood for weeks after.

The wounded coming back were received differently. The Tampan troopers were browner and thinner and uglier than before, but they cheered and petted the heroes until the train pulled out for the Northern hospitals. After that the men who had never left the States became sullen and insubordinate and worked themselves into a state of melancholy inebriation—because they had not been given a chance to prove that they were soldiers all. But this is the story of Sadie, the toughest, blackest and sweetest-voiced recruit who ever came to the Black Horse troop.

His beauty was purely physical. He never learned anything about horses in the cavalry service. It was his instinct to master a mount. His limbs had a most beautiful cavalry curve, and superb saddle muscles bulged out the thick trousers of army blue. His shoulders and lungs were equaled only in power by his digestion.

Sadie never had a serious interval. At least, not while he was a soldier. In fact, there is less seriousness in a black troop of cavalry than in any other place in the world. But you ought to see them on a skirmish line! They fight without nerves, feelings, fears. They know no hunger, thirst or pain.

To hear Sadie sing, "Swing a-low, Sweet Chariot," on the moon-lit deck of a transport—well, a man would think things which never occurred to him before—especially if he were advancing toward a hostile coast. And then there was a little gunboat shining through the dark off the starboard bow—a pugnacious little fellow that

shot toward every suspicious gleam or shadow on the tropic sea, and tried to darken the moon with its searchlight. The great dark transport steamed southward through the gloom, secure in the protection of her baby consort's big guns. Indeed, she could have steamed southward just as steadily if the gunboat had perched itself upon her hurricane deck. And Sadie, the black recruit, lounged in the moonlight with the other cavalrymen, and crooned soft melodies about dusky maidens back in the summer States.

As a rule, American soldiers, white and black, eat three times a day. Once in a while, however, in the stress of international war, or an indisposed second cook, it becomes necessary to forego government straights. A box of hard tack is then placed in a convenient place and the men receive orders to "bust" themselves. When the sun is pouring down yellow volleys which make you limp and vicious; when your tongue shrivels up like a boiled clam at the mere sight of salt water; when the fresh water is warm as a flask of spirits kept in a laborer's hip pocket, and smells as if it had been filtered through all the blankets in the forecastle; when you are unloading petulant and plunging cavalry horses, and your feet are blistered from the hot decks, and your blue army shirt steams and suffocates—well, no matter if you are fond of hard tack, you can't choke it down.

The black troops landed, while the little gunboat watched and pointed its guns toward the great, brown, treeless hills. Somewhere back of those sun-burned, de-

serted hills there was a city, which sported the wrong flag. The name of that city was Santiago. The black cavalrymen knew that they must hunt the hills for the town and correct the little mistake about the flag—more than that was the business of the white commissioned officers.

Back from the hills the night shadows crept. The sun sank blood-red and vicious across the water. The smell of rain was in the air. The picket lines were stretched upon the shore, and the baggage was piled above the high-tide mark. There had been an informal guard-mount, and the men had received orders not to leave the camp. They were refreshed by hot coffee and a plunge in the sea, but they were hungry still. A couple of vultures trailed across the sky, but nothing human could be seen by the troopers on land—nothing save the darkening hills and the watcher out on the bay. A rain cloud skirted the shore-line to the left, and its torrents pounded the water and the hill-margins a half mile away. The men could hear it coming closer. Those who watched from the gunboat could see faint red lights far back in the hills.

The black troopers growled because they had to smoke on an empty stomach; they growled because the rain put out their pipes and the cook fires, and because they would have to shiver in the wet and cold for a dozen hours. Tropical showers do not last, but it is unpleasant to sleep where they have been. But big, black, toughened cavalrymen can sleep anywhere. It was very late when the

dripping stable guard of the Black Horse troop kicked about among the puddles and snoring soldiers, inquiring testily:

"Wheah's Sadie—wheah's dat a-fool niggah, Sadie?"

Now, the sentry had walked his post up and down the picket line for two long, soaking hours. He wanted to turn over his orders to Sadie, and be relieved. But it was evident that Sadie was not in camp. To go about proclaiming the fact would mean trouble for the missing recruit, therefore the sentry went back to his post and started to do Sadie's guard. The idea that he was doing anybody in particular a good turn did not worry the sentry, but if he could have caught the black recruit that minute something would have happened.

That night the corporal of the guard did an unsoldierly thing. He deliberately woke up, consulted his watch, and figured out by a process of his own that Sadie should be walking his post down on the picket line. As Sadie was a recruit, and it was the first night on hostile soil, the corporal deemed it advisable to find out if his man would challenge properly. The top layer of wet sand under the non-commissioned officer was thoroughly warmed through, and he hated to let it cool off, which was very easy as compared to the warming process, but a conscientious man was the corporal. When he found the wrong man on post, he was glad that he had left his warm hole in the sand.

Not long after that, Sadie slipped past the guard with two limp pullets and a very noisy, very much animated

game chicken in his arms. The recruit was panting and wet, indeed, but his eyes were shining. He tethered the game one out in the bush and concealed the two limp birds under his blanket. Then he buckled on his six-shooter, shouldered his carbine, and started for the picket line to relieve his man. It was not until Sadie had told the much-abused sentry where he would find a plump chicken that there was peace. Meanwhile the corporal figured out the best way was to do his duty on the following day, and slowly re-warmed his hole in the sand. And the gaudy little gamecock ruffled his feathers in the dark and clucked low, and scolded.

The result of the corporal's figuring reached Sadie about seven o'clock the following morning. He was in condition to hear the worst, for one of those plump pullets had been broiled at dawn. There is the makings of a mighty soldier in a plump Spanish chicken. The colored corporal reported the absence of the black recruit to the top sergeant, also black. Among other things, the top sergeant mentioned the affair to the troop commander, who was white, and also very wet and ugly that morning. And so it came about that the black recruit saw the troop commander striding his way about seven a. m. with blood in his eye and these words:

"Do you think this troop is out hunting butterflies—eh? You're under arrest—understand? And I'll court-martial you when the *men* take that town up in the hills—understand—eh?"

It would be prompt and certain self-destruction for the

black recruit to answer back a white commissioned officer, who was so wet and ugly. Sadie was enough of a soldier to know this. He stood at attention and saluted gracefully every time his superior officer finished a sentence. After that he was placed under a guard. The sentry who had done an extra hour for the recruit the night before was Sadie's friend for life. This was brought about because the second plump pullet had also been broiled at dawn. The two friends conferred together during the first hour of the recruit's incarceration.

"Ah mos' cert'ny feels strong dis a-mawnin'," observed the black boy. "Dat Spanish chickum did mos' glorifusly do her duty by a-me. But Ah had to gib obah mah shootin' ir'ns to dat Gawd-a-fearin' cawpril. What foh does yoh s'pose he dun wanted to make trouble foh a-me dat away? . . . Is de troop dun a-gwine up de hills dis a-mawnin'?"

The prisoner was told that all the horses were to be kept back with one troop to guard them—that the others were going to start up toward the city as dough boys early in the afternoon—that there were a half dozen dough-boy regiments farther up the hills—that there were acres of block houses and miles of barb-wire fences and trenches, and a whole Spanish army hidden somewhere within the sound of cannon—that the American fleet was laying off the coast in front of Santiago, and that the Spanish squadron was behind Castle Morro in

the harbor—that there was going to be merry hell up the hills which would last for a week or ten days.

"Is—de—Black — Hoss—troop—dun—agwine—up—de—hills—or—stay back?" Sadie's full lips, which formed the question, were ashy gray. The words were uttered in a slow, hopeless whisper. Here's the reply to his question:

"Does yoh fink for one moment dat dey's agwine to leab de cream an' skallups ob de whole niggah regiment back heah to shine up de skates—when de band's dun agwine to play dead marches an' de variations up yondah?"

The troop commander was approaching. The sentry came to "present arms," and the prisoner stood "at attention." Great thoughts were in the brain of the black recruit. He was about to make the bravest effort of his life.

"Will de captain 'low me to go up de hills in de troop to-day—an' serve mah time after de fun am obah, sah?"

"I'll turn you over to the other troop, where you'll be under a guard—that's what I'll do to you—understand—eh?"

The sun was steaming out the rain from the troop commander's blouse, but he was wet and ugly still. Sadie saluted in graceful silence, and choked down a great, dry lump in his throat. After the captain was out of earshot, the black recruit said to his friend:

"Las' night Ah dun larieted mah lil' game chickum out in the bresh. He wah a-crowin' up in de hills, when Ah

heard him. Ah knowed he wah a game chickum 'cos he dun crowed in de night time. You bring him heah to a-me. I wants dat lil' game chickum. He dun make me lose de onliest chance in dis niggah's life."

The little game one was tethered by one leg in front of the quarters of the disgraced Sadie. The two talked to each other, while the mutual friend was absent for a handful of grain.

"Whah foh yoh dun call to me in de night time, when yoh knows Ah mustn't leab a-camp?"

The game one talked back spitefully. His beady black eyes sparkled with pure wickedness, and he squared off in splendid fighting form when the prisoner thrust his heavy boot within the circle of the tether. The bird had thick, stocky legs, and gaffs hard as crystal. His body feathers were glossy black, and his muscular neck had copper-hued trimmings. Even for a Spanish chicken, the game one was a fancy article.

"Ah mos' cert'ny los' mah nerve when Ah heard yoh callin' to me up in de hills las' ebenin'. Ah sure knowed you had some lil' sisters up dar. You ought to be a mos' broken-hearted lil' chickum foh dis a-poh niggah. Ah hopes de whole Spanish army and barb wires comes aheah when de odah troops is dun gone. Yoh and me, an' dose Bay Hoss niggahs will dun take de island bah ahselves. . . . What yoh dun scoldin' about, mah lil' game chickum?"

The hot, brown hills were darkening again. Over in the low southeast, the crescent shaving of a moon paled

in the deepening twilight. Out in the bay, the gunboat leaned on its moorings and watched. All at once there ripped over the hot Cuban hills a ragged carbine volley. Evidently the black troops had found something to play with. An hour afterwards, and the hills were great dark shadows, for the night overhung them. The white shaving of a moon was higher.

About this time every darkey cavalryman in the Bay Horse troop heard the howls of a fallen sentry, and the angry cackling of an outraged game chicken. But not one of the boys who stayed behind saw the black recruit, who was clutching a loaded carbine and whirring away toward the great black shadows.

Now, everybody knows that you can't see Santiago from the coast. You can't even see Morro Castle a mile out at sea, because its ramparts are the color of the rocks. Entering the channel, your craft will be at the mercy of Morro's guns. Then you will pass the sunken Merrimac, and a couple of Spanish men-of-war, the cabins of which are excellent breeding-places for big fish. After that you will see a round basin full of warm, yellow water and hungry sharks. To the left is a sun-scorched plain, where yellow-fever patients fight for life, losing generally; and in front, sitting on the slope of a hill, is Santiago, minus some of its rottenness of a year ago, but hardly immaculate yet.

Four miles back of Santiago there is a hill which looks down upon the city and its harbor. Upon the top of that hill there is a big block-house. Upon its sides there are

many other block-houses, also barbed pitfalls, intrenchments—and graves. It was upon that hill that the black demons broke their leash, forgot their thirst, and gained everything save the glory they deserved. But they were only regulars.

Something went wrong in a volunteer battalion that afternoon. They were good men and brave, but raw. They had not eaten for many hours. The sun beat pitilessly down. It soaked into the wet sand and sent forth a sickening steam. It sank through the dusty campaign hats of the volunteers and put mad thoughts in every brain. It swung a black-dotted haze before every eye. It chafed the skin under every cartridge belt, and blistered every neck. And all the while there came down from the hill the nagging, maddening patter of the long-range Mausers. And all the while there came down from the sky the stifling, pitiless pressure of the sun.

The volunteer battalion wavered and fell back—"retired in disorder," the official report read. It was the one ugly blotch on the American soldiers in Cuba. The volunteers have long since been forgiven by the friends of their native State; but the colored cavalry troops, and the other regulars who did not fall back, will never forgive that battalion for what the sun madness wrought in their raw ranks at the base of San Juan hill that July day.

The "niggers" went by them—a cursing, unfeeling mass of animals. They preserved a ragged skirmish line all the way. They ran a little, dropped to their bellies

and fired, vaulted the barbed entanglements and caught their breath in the trenches they had gained. And Sadie was in the ranks of his own Black Horse troop, clutching a red-hot carbine, and talking to himself in a perfect delirium of joy!

"Dose white ladies is a-mos' cert'ny unhappy," the black recruit was heard to mutter after the raw battalion was left behind. The words came in a stifled whisper. His throat was caked with hot dust, and his nostrils were full of it, but Sadie did not know. He did not remember that he should have been a prisoner back with the game chicken and the Bay Horse troops. He did not know that the troop commander had seen him on the skirmish line with the others, and the white officer hardly knew whether to laugh or swear. As a matter of fact, the troop commander did both, and he also hoped that the black recruit would get wounded, so that he might forego the punishment which his insubordination made necessary. Sadie knew nothing, felt nothing but the glory of the moment.

"An' dis am mos' cert'ny a wahm time. Is Ah glad Ah'm libbin'? Well, Ah hope Ah is. . . . Dey sure ought to gib us asbestos mittins to pump dese heah carbines, foh dey would mos' cert'ny boil coffee! . . . Hello, dar, mah angel broddah, gimme dat a-cigarette. Ain't yoh a-dyin' fast enuf, widout hittin' de coffin nails?"

A wounded Spaniard, braced up in a trench, was weakly puffing at a cigarette; nor was he the only one who

was seen smoking and dying on the slope of San Juan Hill that day. Sadie drew a deep inhalation into his lungs, then put the cigarette back between the lips of the Spanish soldier.

"Ah guess Ah don't want yoh las' butts—yoh may wake up in de middle ob de night an' need it. . . . O-o-o-oh, dah's dat Gawd-a-fearin' cawpril!"

The non-commissioned officer who had made trouble for the recruit a few nights before was having a very fast time. A Spanish infantryman was in the trench with him. Both were fighting for their lives. The Spaniard had a bayonet attached to his Mauser; the corporal had nothing but a bare, hot carbine. Sadie settled the matter in favor of the Black Horse trooper. Many of the block-houses were silenced, but whistling death still blazed out of the big one on top of the hill. The barb wire traps became thicker, and more men on the skirmish line fell back into the trenches and grunted out impotent curses. Many others lay silent. The black troops were not the only ones who kept the small of their backs to the trenches, no longer Spanish, that afternoon.

"Dis cert'ny am de mos' glorifussest moment ob mah life," gasped the black recruit. He vaulted a barbed wire pitfall and was racing toward a trench, two rods ahead. Two Spaniards scrambled out and started to dash for the summit. They never reached it, because too many American soldiers were counting on just such chances as that. The battle fever was wild in Sadie's blood. At that moment some one up in the block-house did not shoot too

high. Sadie stumbled and was the first man who landed in the upper pit.

"Ugh!" grunted the black recruit. "Ah mos' cert'ny am punctahed at de present time. Ah wondah ef dose fool Spaniards am acquaintanced ob de fac' dat dey can't kill dis a-niggah. . . . Ah is dun agwine to sit heah till de boys am in de block-house up yondah."

The above came in choking fragments. The troop commander had seen the rescue of the corporal and the plunge of the black recruit into the higher trench. For some reason he swore. It was not a loud oath. The dust which stuck in his throat would not permit that. And that night from the top of San Juan Hill many American soldiers, white and black, but Americans all, saw the lights of Santiago shining down in the valley. And all night long the Red Cross men kicked about the trenches with lanterns.

They found the black recruit sitting in one of the highest pits. His blue army shirt was wet and gory. A carbine rested across his knees. The barrel was cold now. Sadie was asleep.

The Red Cross men thrust the lantern into the face of the black recruit. He opened his eyes, squinted hard at the light, and muttered:

"Wheah's mah lil' game chickum?"

The troop commander stood at the bunk of the black recruit in the temporary hospital just outside of Santiago. By the way, the city no longer sported the wrong flag.

And there was a twinkle in the eyes of the troop commander as he said:

"We're going to send you back to the States to-morrow on the hospital ship. We won't court-martial you until you get back from sick-leave—understand—eh?"

"If de captain dun gibs me five yeahs an' a bob-tail, Ah'll still be glad dat Ah wah in de Black Hoss troop at de propah moment, sah!"

"You sabed mah life," said the corporal.

"Why, what yoh talkin' about, cawpril?" said Sadie.

And when the captain and the corporal had gone away, the black recruit questioned his best friend in this wise:

"Is de Bay Hoss niggahs come up yet—wif mah lil' game chickum?"

The Silent Trooper.

THE SILENT TROOPER.

Lander, trooper in private ranks, never told just why he was kicked by his lieutenant, Mat Crim. Lander never told anything. That accounts for his being left to himself more than is common or judicious for one of Uncle Sam's horsemen in field or post.

A troop is a family of big boys. Some of them are big bad boys, and an odd thing about it is that these are not always the unpopular ones. Troopers do not fall on the neck of a new man. They treat him with pinnacled dignity, like old cavalry horses treat additions to the picket line. If the new man, in a reasonable period, develops no objectionable traits, he will find himself a member of the family, which is other words for a good fellow.

Because a man happens to be a gambler or a drunkard; or because he has a deep-rooted aversion for the various prongs of the law—a kind of shuddering aversion such as many soldiers and gentlemen have for work—none of these things form a primary necessity for his ostracism from the family group.

But he can't be a silent man nor a sneak; neither can he manipulate a voluminous correspondence. These things are fatal. Lander was a silent man.

He was also my "bunkie," which means that I could

put out a hand almost any time in the night and touch him. Naturally, under such conditions, my very proper prejudice against him on account of his infernal reserve would either grow into an uncomfortable suspicion, if not worse, or else I would learn to look beyond this serious mental derangement of his. As it was, I began to feel for him that strong, wholesome respect which one always has for physical capability, when it is not accompanied by mental sluggishness.

Then I liked Lander's face. He was a handsome devil—handsome astride his horse, and at mess and at grooming—handsome when silent. Yet I have seen his eyelids droop over a wicked pair of shining eyes, and seen an ugly, bloodless look about his lower lip.

I saw this on the hot day when Lieut. Mat Crim kicked him in the back, because—I wish I knew myself. I will tell you what I saw.

A couple of troops of the regiment were out on target range. We were camped in a bunch of unaspiring foothills which, late in the afternoon, rested in the huge conical shadow of Old Baldy. The tip of Old Baldy's icy cone punctures the sky at one of the highest points in Arizona. We were in that sand-stricken land where wayfarers have to climb for water and dig for fuel-wood. We were in that heat-ridden land where the lean, long coyote scents death and trots cautiously thither—where the vulture cranes his bare, crimson neck from behind a cloud, and peers earthward for dying things.

The loose walls of the big Sibley tent were not flapping

in a breeze that afternoon. The silken, tasseled flag which crested headquarters hung limp and motionless. The sun's rays were slanting and vicious. They sapped the energy out of the breezes as they did out of every living thing. The men rolled about the tents in wet, wilted misery. Grooming call would soon be sounded. That meant three-quarters of an hour over a sweating horse in the sunshine. The men were putting on their discarded shirts now, and swearing in a listless monotone.

Lieut. Mat Crim was a little, wasp-waisted chap, who had a dirty trick of getting mad. His West Point days were too fresh in his mind for him to be a good officer. He never allowed himself to lose sight of the fact that he was a commissioned officer and that a mighty stretch of superiority lay between him and a common, enlisted man. Crim had just been transferred to our troop. Lander had come from another regiment two months before. The two men met that hot afternoon—just before grooming time.

Lander saluted. Crim stopped short, caught at his breath several times and began to relieve himself of a lot of livid English, all of which struck me as mysterious. Lander stood "at attention," said something in a low voice and walked away.

Lieut. Crim was ungovernable. He sprang after Lander, kicked him in the back and said:

"I'll make life a hell for you, Charlie Howard!" which I judge must have been Lander's civilian name.

Lander turned, looked devilish and raised his big right arm. His superior officer was under it.

But Lander's arm never touched Lieut. Crim, a circumstance which made me cry aloud:

"Thank God!"

It dropped down, while Lander laughed low and melodiously. I was thinking how wicked Lander looked when he laughed that way. Then the bugle sounded "stables."

Every man in the troop detested the lieutenant, and all admired Lander for keeping his nerve. One of the most unprofitable things a soldier can do is to strike a superior officer. The same kind of a finish awaits him as if he had been found sleeping at his post.

I watched Lander, and Lander watched Lieut. Crim during the several following weeks. And they were not pretty eyes, those strange eyes of Lander's, as they trailed the movements of his superior officer.

To all he preserved his self-bound intensity. Glad, indeed, would I have been to come very close to the heart of this silent man, because I learned to have deep feelings for him. He possessed the cold nerve which makes heroes, and the great, warm heart which makes friends—I was sure of this. But his nature was broad enough to cover his troubles, so he did not confide in men. Heroes can hate well.

Why my eyes wandered to the opposite side of one of Lander's letters while he was holding it up, and there lingered for a single disgraceful second, is something

more than I can explain. I can only regret it. At any rate, I saw these words:

"Oh, Charlie, do let me come to you!"

A lady-killer is my silent friend, thought I; but I didn't mean to read part of his letter—really, I didn't.

After five weeks the troops were ordered to the barracks. No one was sorry, for life on target range in Arizona is tedious, putting it with studied mildness. And then they have mosquito netting in the barracks.

A tragedy was enacted on those moonlit foothills at Old Baldy's base the last night on range. I am not a handy man at tragedies. It was this way:

"Say, old chap," said Lander in a light manner the morning before, "do a little favor for me, will you? I want you to meet a lady for me. I believe I will have another engagement to-night!"

"A lady in this damned country!" I whispered excitedly. Nothing but greaser maidens and squaws had I seen for months—it seemed.

Reluctantly he handed me a note, part of which is below:

"I could not help coming. I was frantic when I learned that he was transferred to your troop. You must meet me to-night. Did you think I could forget you? Oh, Charlie, I may be acting unwomanly, but I am desperate. No one knows me here in the village. I will be near the last adobe hut on the north. Oh, why did you go away? I thought * * * Come to-night. ELSIE."

"It's a common yarn," said Lander nervously. "She

knew me up north as a civilian. Crim and I were stationed there, but he did not know me. I was only a private. She was lovely to us both. The queer thing about it is that I won out. Then it occurred to me that I was only a common soldier, who had flunked at everything else he tried, and hardly fit to marry, so I applied for a transfer and chased out. She wouldn't have Crim, anyway.

"Now Crim turns up again in the attitude of my superior officer, which is very dramatic, and the little woman is here, which is also very dramatic; and as I can't see them both I want you to go to her. I must keep the other engagement. Tell her I'm a deserter, or dead, or any old thing."

For the second time I heard Lander laugh low and melodiously. I can hear it yet. He was either acting or a devil for coolness.

"There'll be a show down to-night," he said.

After retreat, the lieutenant called for his horse and loped slowly townward. The sun was red and low, and the silken flag over headquarters was cased for the night. A little later Lander entered the tent, drew his cartridge belt about him and sauntered carelessly out.

"Don't keep the little woman waiting long," he whispered to me. I watched his form grow dim in the shadows toward the village. Then I stepped into my cartridge belt, looked at my six-shooter, and became one of the mysterious townward procession. Something is going to drop on the village road this night, I thought.

Lander was sitting by the roadside a mile from camp. He was puffing a cheroot, and smiled, but did not speak to me. A round moon whitened the heavens about Old Baldy. I walked away from the village, then stole back concealed by the chaparral. While I waited, I wondered why I had not remembered to shake hands with Lander that night.

It seemed a long time before the lieutenant's horse was heard down the road. I hoped that Lander would pick off his man from ambush. I hated to think he would do it.

"Dismount, lieutenant!" sang out the man who had been kicked, and he did not salute his superior officer.

What Crim said as he obeyed is rather important but not necessary to this narrative. But Crim knew then that he was only a common human man, like the being before him, whom he had kicked. He saw in the faded twilight a private in the regular army who, in the presence of other men, was his slave, but who, alone in the foothills of Arizona, was a cool, determined, smiling foe. He saw before him the handsome Charlie Howard, who was loved by a woman he loved. He saw the reckless light in Howard's eyes which boded no good. And in spite of all these things, Lieut. Mat Crim was game.

The moon was looking over Old Baldy's icy crown now, and the great dome above and the sand below were filled with its whiteness.

"You acted the coward once, little officer—try to be a man to-night," I heard Lander say. "It was imprac-

ticable to procure seconds, so you will have to rely upon the honor of a common soldier. Perhaps you never associated such sentiments with an enlisted man. I see that you have your six-shooter. I was too soft-hearted to bruise you with my hands."

Crim looked at his man keenly. He then looked over his six-shooter carefully. He had been a clever shot at West Point.

"Who gives the signal?" he added, clearing his throat.

"Count three in the position of 'raise pistol,'" said Lander politely, "after which you are at liberty to fire as soon as you please."

Crim's tall gelding browsed uneasily and whinnied. He wanted to get back to the hay on the picket line, but he was a trained cavalry horse and did not think of trotting off alone. I watched, not knowing what else to do.

Both men took position, and came to the regulation "raise pistol."

"Ready?" asked the lieutenant, clearing his throat again.

"All ready," answered the silent man cheerfully. The moonbeams whitened his forehead.

"One," said the lieutenant. Both men were motionless.

"Two!" he screamed. His arm dropped. There was a noise and an empty shell in his six-shooter. The lieutenant had forgotten to say "Three."

Lander was dying in the moonlight, and there was no

empty shell in his six-shooter! Mat Crim, his superior officer, ran to his horse like a thing affrighted, and galloped away.

"Go and tell her, old chap," Lander whispered, "that Charlie Howard was afraid to meet her to-night. Tell her that his memory is a far worthier shrine for her worship than—a common cavalryman. Tell her I was a deserter, because—damn it all, old man, I think a lot of the little witch. You needn't tell her that Crim is a coward—just say he is a good shot."

And when there were no more words I hurried away to the village to keep Lander's engagement. She was there—a little thing, pretty and trembling. There was a lace handkerchief in her hand and a soft perfume about her.

I told her what Lander had said. She did not cry, but clutched my arm with fierce strength.

"Take me to him," she demanded.

I led the way back over the rolling road, and when we neared the spot where I had left my silent friend in the moonlight, I heard a long, low, mournful howl, the answer mingled with the echo.

"Let us hurry—faster!" I said.

There was no change. Lieut. Mat Crim had not returned. The woman picked up the pistol which had fallen by the silent man's side, and drew open the cylinder with the ease of a veteran. Six loaded cartridges fell into her hand.

"You saw it all?" she questioned, slowly. "And he was your friend?"

I bowed.

"Then you will kill the coward for your friend's sake?" She spoke the words altogether too loudly.

"He is my superior officer, madame," I whispered.

"Leave me now," she commanded.

"But, madame," I objected, "I must walk with you back to the village."

"No, no! Leave me. I have this." She was replacing the cartridges into the cylinder.

As I stood watching her, a bugler in the camp a mile away played the last call a soldier hears at night—the mournful, melancholy taps. And I looked down upon my friend, the silent man—they would sound taps over him to-morrow—and I forgot that I was only a private in the regular army.

"Leave me now," she repeated.

And when I had gone a few paces I turned. She was bending low.

The moon was high above Old Baldy now, and its whiteness was upon the upturned face of the silent man.

Lieut. Mat Crim called for his horse the next morning, when a guard told him that the bodies of Private Lander and a white woman had been found out in the chaparral.

The Degeneration of Laddie.

THE DEGENERATION OF LADDIE.

In trouble was his normal condition. Laddie was considerable of an artist in the first place, therefore he could not have found himself in a worse predicament than to be in Uncle Sam's service. If his artistic nature had only been in his fingers, instead of his whole being, Laddie might have found hapiness in the troop, for we all loved him.

In that affected brain of his there was another distorted idea. He was possessed of the wild notion that he was as clever a chap mentally and with his muscles as any of his superior officers—oh!

Laddie feared neither black man nor white. He had been in Porto Rico three months, and had enjoyed only ten days' liberty. In spite of this handicap, the smiles of the richest and prettiest senoritas in Manati were for him solely, and I honestly believe that he had more friends among the natives than any other cavalryman. His was a genius for making friends.

Three soldiers were standing on a mountain side just out of Ciales. It was early evening. Twenty miles away, through a rift in the mountains, they could see the

Atlantic. The sun was sinking into the sea. The eastern highlands were dim and shadowy now.

"Say we walk to Manati," suggested one of the three, grinning. It was eight miles. Many are the government mules that have lain down and died on that trail. The Manati River crosses it eleven times. Many are the government mules that have kicked vainly and been carried away limp and lifeless, because they struck the Manati fords in a wrong place. And government mules are not without a number of kicks.

"You could not pay me to hit that trail in the nighttime," declared the second soldier.

"I'll go with you," said Laddie, smiling. He was thinking of the bright-eyed senorita, whose father had a cellar full of wines, pale and ruddy. The idea grew upon him.

"Oh, I wouldn't go unless all three of us do," put in the cavalryman who was first to speak.

Laddie was silent. He knew that he would go alone if he saw the senorita that night.

"What time is it?" he asked finally.

"Five forty-five."

"Have you got a coin? Throw it up. If it's head, I go alone." Laddie was smiling still.

"You've only been out of calaboose a couple of days. Be careful you don't get collared again," warned the soldier holding the coin. He threw it up.

"Tail she is," they told Laddie. Together the soldiers three wended their way back toward Ciales. A hundred

yards they traversed in silence. Laddie stopped short. He was not smiling now.

"Throw it up once more," he asked of them. By his manner one would think he was trying to borrow money. The other two soldiers made use of those expressions which the natives over here picked up first.

"Well, you've got your way. It's head this time."

Laddie rolled up his sleeves. Then he felt in his pockets. "Give me a piece of tobacco. I'm short."

It was handed to him.

"I'll be back by reveille," he sang, and trotted down the trail toward the first ford.

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"Why, it's a cinch," quoth Laddie in the first stream. The ripples splashed against his thighs, and his lower jaw became unruly. He made the first four fords, and the day was gone. He sat down on a rock and rested, while the moon rose up and cheered him.

"Look out for the fifth and sixth fords going to Ciales —the sixth and seventh they are coming back." He had often heard the boss of the pack train say this. And he remembered how his own horse had struggled in these places when the squad came up from Manati. Laddie shivered and started on.

"A man ought to have four legs for this fording business. Why in the devil was I born such a noodle? The sixth is deep and broad; the seventh is fast and deep."

He scrambled down the bank of the sixth. Already he could hear the splashing down stream—the splashing of

the falls just at the right of the seventh crossing. He stood ankle deep in the river. A big red horse, resting in the shallows, skipped out almost from under his feet. It thrilled him unpleasantly. Faintly, in the moonlight, he could see the trail continuing on the other side. He faced a few degrees up stream and plunged in. The mountain current chilled him breast high, and soaked some papers in the pocket of his army shirt.

Laddie made the sixth, and the seventh, too—after a fearful fight. His constant thought was, "What would I do without the moonlight?" He felt strong when he discerned the lights of Manati, glimmering in the valley below. It was only half-past eight. He had done well.

Laddie passed the volunteer military headquarters going back, and inquired of the sentinel the time of night. It was about to strike twelve. He would be in his own quarters by three—if the moon shone on the fords. He was quite happy.

Stars were visible only in patches. Black streaks were moving around the moon. Laddie looked up and started on a trot. When the city was left behind, he removed his trousers and put on his leggins once more next to the skin. The memory of the red horse in the shallows made him do this. For the first time he felt weary, when he climbed up the Ciales bank of the fourth crossing. Raindrops struck his face. The next ford was the ugly one, and it was growing darker, darker. Already he could hear the plunging river. His feet were troubling him now, and the trail was slippery from rain.

"God help me if I don't get there by reveille. They'll think I've deserted—and with my record, heavens!"

* * * * * * * *

He stood in the murky blankness on the fifth river bank. It was so dark that he could not tell where the cliffs ended and the sky began; he could not see half way across the angry Manati. Ah, but he could hear its roar! Yes, and when he looked long he could see its foam. The tropical rain beat down.

His strength was not so great as before, Laddie thought. The waters beat mightily against him. Every time he raised his foot he feared that he must fall. He passed the nucleus of the river's force. His breath failed. He stepped on a rolling stone, sank, and fought the waters hands and feet. Chilled and bruised, he groped in the rain for the trail. He had made the fifth ford going back—oh, but he was weary. It seemed as if he found the way and he walked on—for ages. His feet were feverish and painful. He approached the river, the last one he feared. It looked ugly and unnatural.

Laddie plunged in, struck a deep hole and was borne swiftly down stream. He had hit the Manati in a wrong place. And then began a cavalry recruit's battle against faintness, fatigue, and a wicked current. The perpetual smile on Laddie's tanned countenance vanished when he told of that battle.

"I felt that my time to croak had come," Laddie said. Two hundred yards below the point where he entered the stream, the young cavalryman clambered up on the

other side, and then he fell down in the rain. This is the way he goes on with the story:

"I was groggy when I got up, and cold with the wind and wet. I knew that I had wandered from the trail between the fifth and sixth fords, because I had struck deep water. I groped along the bank both ways, until I thought dawn must be near. I prayed that I would stumble upon the trail.

"This extremity I would not have deemed necessary, if I was only to be hung for missing reveille, but I would get a call-down from four different parties besides. This thought kept me on my feet. At last I walked away from the river and got tangled up in a barbed wire fence. The heavens did not give forth a ray, and it rained on. Following the fence to the left, it led me back to the river. I shuddered. There was still one more chance—to go the other way with the wires. This I did, and to my ears was borne a sweet sound. When I had wrung the water out of my eyes, I also saw a sweet sight. A dog barked and a shadowy shack loomed up before me.

"I knew I would get shot at for a guerrilla, if I stole up, because the dog was making announcements. I vented Spanish, therefore, in a loud voice and at a distance:

"'Americano soldato! Americano soldato!' I threw in some English to make a hit, and the rear door opened a couple of inches. 'Tengo muchas penas, senor,' I wailed, all of which means that I was an American soldier of many sorrows.

"'Enter, Senor Americano. Que lastima.' I was singularly relieved to see the good wife hang up the family musket. I was also made happy to see the good wife rake up the coals in the fire-place and start a pot of coffee. Porto Rican coffee is as delicate and subtle in flavor as it is mighty in body. I drank and would have departed. There were dry clothes for me in the woman's hand. Her husband had lit a cigar and gave it to me. An extra hammock had been strung. How I wished I was not a soldier that night.

"Yes, I rested. I thought I had made the Spaniard understand the imperative nature of reveille roll-call, but I hadn't. His spirit of hospitality was too massive. He would not let me depart until I had lain down. How delicious was the drowsiness that stole over me—how beautiful that sleep. Alas, but it was a long one, too."

* * * * * * * *

The first streaks of pink dawn were mellowing the east, when Laddie moved. The cigar was still in his hand. He jumped up with a groan of pain. His feet were sore, his muscles lame and stiff. The pot of coffee was still warm upon the embers. He swallowed a quantity and jumped into his wet clothes. The operation was a painful one, putting it with studied mildness. Then he grasped the hand of the Spanish gentleman, murmured his gratitude, and dashed out into the dawn toward the trail. He could see it now winding upward toward the heights. He had missed it the night before by a quarter of a mile.

Laddie reached the summit. Ciales stood out upon the cliffs a mile and a half away. And from the tiny village over the rocks and hills there was borne the first call a soldier hears in the morning, the cheery reveille. Poor Laddie groaned. He did not hurry after that.

The troopers were at breakfast when he reached the quarters. The top-sergeant met him with certain phrases of English which would look strange if reproduced, and then went with him to the commanding officer. The captain told Laddie, among other things, that he was a disgrace to his country, and ordered him locked up. The prisoner wearily moved his bunk over to the Spanish jail, and rested all the rest of the day. Then he commenced to think. That evening when Kruger, a Hoosier recruit, brought Laddie's supper over to the jail, he found that the prisoner had become solid with the Spanish policemen already—solid to such an extent that they had allowed him to stroll in the plaza and watch the sunset. It is pretty to see the sun sink beyond the mountains away up there in Ciales. And Kruger, the Hoosier recruit, told the top-sergeant how solid Laddie was with the Spanish policemen—all of which caused the top to be very angry and much trouble for the prisoner. The latter spent the night in thought.

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On the morning of the second day after this, they found that Laddie's bunk was empty, except for the following letter, which was characteristic:

"Dear Captain—My chief regret in taking this step is that I do so while the features of Kruger, the Hoosier child, are still intact. If a dirty word is written next to my name in the troop books, it is because there is no alternative. I believe that it is the desire of those above me to omit my name from roll calls.

"I make no rash promises about being dead when retaken, if any such unfortunate circumstance should occur. I could not wait for a legitimate discharge, because the vermin here have got me bluffed. And besides, I am afraid of the noisome la viruella (smallpox). My fellow convict was taken away with it this morning. He was quite a gentleman, by the way.

"Pure Castilians walk through my apartments with their noses in a sling. They walk through rapidly. I have not that privilege. I did not consult the worthy Porto Rican policia before leaving. Had I done so they would probably have wished me godspeed.

"I have enjoyed the service. I have met some right royal good fellows. I have not the space nor the command of English to write concerning some others. I have several sore toes, and a painful remembrance of the Manati fords. I hate to face my mother.

"Here's looking at you all. I do this with no rum in my brain. May you all serve your thirty years and live happily ever afterwards in the soldiers' home, and may I reach God's country before I'm twenty-one.

"Lovingly, LADDIE."

Toreador, the Game One.

TOREADOR, THE GAME ONE.

Only two things in this world did Benito, the poor Porto Rican, love. One was Marie, who lived with her mother in a tiny shack away up in the mountains, and the other was Toreador, a very fancy, very trim and very, very game little red chicken.

Now, Sunday is market day in that little tropical island, and the natives bring their wares to the plazas of the villages. Then in loud voices they tell the passers-by just how good and cheap their things are. And every Sunday morning Marie used to trip down the trail into Corizel, with a basket of sweetmeats upon her head, and then she would cry: "Cocoa de dulce! Cocoa de dulce!" until her apron was heavy, and jingled with big centavos, and all the sweetmeats were gone.

Benito would lavish his single centavo for a piece of Marie's sweets, but mostly he cared for the smile from Marie's dark, pretty eyes, which she always gave him. When Marie called aloud, "Cocoa de dulce," Benito thought that it was the sweetest sound he had ever heard, and after Marie's cute figure was lost in the coffee shrubs which bordered the trail, Benito would sigh and walk

back to his little room in the poorest and shabbiest of all the poverty shacks in the district. Then he would divide the cocoanut sweets with Toreador, telling the game one all the while how wonderfully sweet and pretty was the maiden whom he gazed at so long every Sunday.

Now, Toreador had blood in his veins as blue as the ocean at night. He was only a baby bird, but his race dated back to the time when Castilians ruled the world and owned most of it. Toreador was the scion of the gamest fighting stock ever pitted in that land of fair senoritas and fancy cocks. Toreador had gaffs as sharp as a surgeon's lance and as tough as ivory. Muscles were on his body as hard as steel nails. He had a wicked beak and a long, thick neck—a typical fighting neck, and brownish black eyes so bright that they shone like electric sparks.

Toreador's father was a champion of other days. Everybody for miles around Corizel knew the record and pedigree of this bird, and everybody envied the rich Spanish planter who owned him, because many were the pesos which the gamecock piled up for him every Sunday. Now Benito had seen the doughty chicken's last fight, after he had laid low five other birds in two hours. He was fighting in the dark, for the spark had run out of both his eyes. And no one was sadder than Benito when the great battle was over and the head of Toreador's splendid sire dropped into the dust of the pit and rested there.

The mother of Benito's bird was as trim and fancy a

lady as ever strutted about a fresh-laid egg. No one but Benito knew of Toreador's illustrious parentage, and no one but Benito knew how the tiny chicken became possessed by the poor Porto Rican. One morning the little brothers and sisters of the artistocratic brood missed one of their number, and the mighty el capitan of the American soldiers, who owned them all, likewise missed the youngster, whom Benito called Toreador and learned to love. That was all there was to it.

In the days that follow Marie grew more pretty to Benito's eyes, and the game one grew strong and hardened.

Time came when Benito could no longer wait for Sundays in order that he might see the little dark-eyed maiden who parted her red lips in a smile for him. So, one evening, he crept up the trail toward the little highland shack of Marie and her mother, and watched while the moon rose. Away up in the northland where the American soldiers came from and lingeringly talked about, it was winter; but the night was warm where Benito was, and the breezes of evening were as soft as only breezes are, and they were laden with the perfume of orange groves wild and vast. The moon rose into the heights and candles glinted in the village down in the valley. Meanwhile Benito watched, and the little Corizel River purled and tinkled on its way to join the Rio Grande.

And when the moon was so bright and big that its white radiance dimmed the stars, Marie came out of the

doorway and turned her face upward. Then she sang to the great, white beauty of the heavens—she sang of love's enchantment, and every note was a rapture to the poor Porto Rican who watched. It seemed to him one moment that his heart must burst, so big was it. Then Marie sang soft and low of slumber, and the tinkle of the tiny Corizel was hushed when the slumber song was ended. The aged mother of the dark-eyed maiden sat with drowsy eyes in the doorway, biding her time.

Next Sunday Marie smiled upon Benito prettier than ever, for she saw that he had a faint look, and that his face was very wan and ashy for a Porto Rican's. She did not know that he had been toiling from dawn to dark for six days, prodding weary oxen over the rocky trail between a big hacienda and Corizel, carrying tons of green coffee. She did not know that he had not eaten enough in those six days to satisfy the game one, nor that he had four bright silver pesos hidden away in his shabby shack. Marie did not know that his four silver pesos and his starvation were for her. But somehow she smiled upon him very sweetly that Sunday. Perhaps it was because she pitied his wan face. And, oh, how happy was Benito, the poor Porto Rican, that day.

A week passed and there were four more silver pesos hidden away in the dingy shack, and Marie did not see Benito this Sunday. Strange things were going on in his hut. Toreador was trimmed for action, like the decks of great fighting ships are. The green and copper-hued feathers of Toreador's neck were cut away. His wings

were clipped, and his limbs and breast laid bare. Then very skillfully, very carefully, Benito scraped and sharpened the gaffs of the game one until they shone like the sabers of American cavalrymen and were as keen as needlepoints.

All the while Toreador clucked and scolded angrily. Never before did his brownish-black eyes gleam with such wicked intensity, and never before did Benito see a bird in such splendid fighting form as was his own little game one, as he strutted about the shack and scolded.

When all the preparations were over, Benito wrapped his eight silver pesos in a cloth, and with the game one under his arm he walked across the town to the cock-pit. Toreador had no experience—only instinct. He was matched against a fancy gray chicken who had won battles before. But the gray chicken never won another, because Toreador, somewhat scratched, but with two eyes and much nerve and wind, crowed lustily while the other was weakly pounding the turf with both wings and a bleeding crest. Marie was gone from the plaza when Benito returned, but he was never so happy before, since he had twice as many pesos as when he started, and he was nearer to the day when he might tell Marie's old mother where his heart was, without shame.

So time passed and Benito's handkerchief became heavier and heavier, while Toreador added craft to his instinct and honor to his race. And Benito alone knew the stock from which his game one sprung.

At last the great day dawned.

Now it was very natural that the captain of the American soldiers should hear of the fame which a certain plebian bird was making, and straightway he sought out the poor native who owned this bird, and fixed a day when he should match his high-born Morro with the dauntless Toreador.

The great day was fixed—the day that would make Benito rich enough to speak to Marie's mother, or so poor that he would long for death.

Thus it was that Toreador, whom men called the peerless plebeian, met the mighty Morro, and great, indeed, was the battle. So nearly alike were the two birds that Benito found it necessary to distinguish Toreador by a ribbon on his left ankle. Men marveled at the likeness between the two birds, and trembled when they thought how terrible the battle would be. The American captain hired a native to train his bird. Benito and this man stood alone in the pit. Each held a chicken under his arm. The cocks were quivering, straining, clucking low and defiantly. The wagers were made; the birds were cooled with an icy spray, and the big cock-pit became as silent as the great white cliffs above.

Benito never could tell what he did the next hour. It was a lifetime for him. His face mirrored the agony, the struggles, the determination of his game one. He thought not of Marie, not of the little fortune he would win or lose. He thought only, lived only for the doughty Spartan, whom he had reared from a chick, and who was trying to live under the onslaught of a worthy foe.

Toreador did not feel Morro's keen gaff as it darkened one side of his head one whit more than did Benito; and the heart of the poor Porto Rican grew cold. Ah, yes, Morro was a worthy foe, but Toreador had not weakened yet. The American captain's chicken hugged closely to Toreador's dark side and stabbed often and deep. At last the birds went into the air. There were thrusts that moment which no one saw. And when the rivals landed, Morro could not keep his feet. He sank to his breast, then slowly, very slowly, his beak dropped toward the turf.

Toreador did not crow. He was staggering, pecking wildly at thin air. Both sides were dark now. Toreador did not know that he had won his last battle. And as the great shout went up for the winning bird, not a soul thought that Toreador had laid his own brother low.

That night Benito walked up the trail toward the shack of Marie and her mother. Twilight had dimmed the sunset land. Over in the low southeast the moon was rising.

Benito was not so happy as he dreamed he would be this moment, yet he was rich now, and yearned to see the little dark-eyed maiden of the highland shack. He thought of the songs she had sung that night, while she gazed up into the twinkling heights. He thought of Toreador, stiff and wounded, back in the town.

Farther up toward the cliffs he could see the shadowy outline of Marie's home. The night was falling upon it, and the tiny Corizel tinkled among the big stones. More

and more of the rocky trail was silently left behind. Very cautiously he emerged from the coffee shrubs a few rods from the shack. He was weak; his breath came fast. The big bag of silver pesos seemed very heavy.

And as Benito's eyes peered through the dark he saw the little maiden whom he loved. The arms of a big American cavalryman were around her, and she was smiling into his eyes.

Then Benito crawled back toward the lights of the village. The heavy bag of silver pesos lay by a big stone at the edge of the trail.

Down in Benito's shack, Toreador, sore and blinded, dreamed of the battle he had won.

But the story of Benito, the poor Porto Rican, is not ended.

The Wooing of Benito.

THE WOOING OF BENITO.

Silk Redmond, cavalryman through necessity, and private of course, sat on the porch of an old banana-house, high up in the interior of Porto Rico. For a trooper, he sadly exerted his brain. It was very foolish for a man in Redmond's position to think at all. It seemed ages to him since patriotic proclivities went quivering through the land and the bodies and souls of callow young men. Then, for the first time in Redmond's life, he had been close enough to the world to discover how threadbare it was worn in some places.

Redmond had just emerged from college. There was a classical unsophistication about him. The youngster who blackened his boots might have given him all kinds of points concerning mundane matters—then. Redmond could have composed an astronomical essay with ease and effect, but he couldn't dash off a murder yarn and make an edition for anything short of a weekly paper. Theoretically, he would have made a fast lawyer, but in practice it would have meant incarceration for a poor devil, whose jag had been officially spoiled, to trust to his pleading in police court.

Silk Redmond needed to be polished off with that sort of jagged pumice which a man gets only by brushing about city streets—and in Uncle Sam's service.

As the tall trooper sat on the porch of the old banana-house, with his toughened cavalry legs hanging over, he mused savagely on the days when he had a grudge against himself—those days when he tried to work off patriotic chills and fever, and be a civilian still.

Turning his back upon college days and a pretty girl, Redmond plunged southward to join his regiment; and not until he sat on the dirty deck of a transport, smoking a very black pipe, and watching the officers up on the spotless bridge, where he dare set foot only at the price of his liberty, did Silk Redmond get time to think. And at night, away up north, a little college girl had completed her studies for the day, and was thinking of a big, noble soldier fellow; and often her eyelids were moist ere her student lamp flickered and sputtered out. But she did not write because she had a mind of her own, this little college girl, and she had told a certain big fellow that he was many kinds of a chump to chase away from his prospects, and everybody who liked him, when there was no show of his ever getting shot at, anyway.

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Mail had come in from the States that day, but there was no letter from the little college town. It was evening now. A disgusted cavalryman swung down from the porch of the old banana-house, answered retreat in a surly tone, and then strolled up the rocky trail toward a

tiny shack where a dark-eyed maiden lived. Now Silk Redmond did this to get even with himself and the college girl. His heart was not with the little dark-eyed maiden, whose name was Marie, but far away in the northland. Redmond was not happy as he panted up the steep trail.

The village of Corizel was in the valley below him, and the little Corizel River splashed down the mountain side, passed by the village and tinkled on toward the Rio Grande. No cavalryman dared enter that village toward which the river was spreading. Hideous la viruela was there—smallpox, the Americans called it. A quarantine hung over the whole valley. That was why Uncle Sam's cavalrymen were quartered in the old banana-house, two miles beyond the village.

Marie had dark, Spanish eyes, cute smiles and ways, the prettiest of red lips and the tiniest of white teeth; but somehow Silk Redmond was gloomy that night. He could think only of the other maiden away up in the northland, where the white faces and the great cities were —the maiden of the little college town, who would not write to him because he was a trooper.

Together they stood, the trooper and Marie, in the moonlight, in front of the highland shack. The great white cliffs rose up above them; and as they stood there with the white moonbeams resting upon their faces, Silk Redmond kissed the little dark-eyed maiden, because it was the proper thing for a trooper to do at such a juncture.

And at that moment the heart of Benito, the poor Porto Rican, was almost broken.

It must be remembered that Benito, who lived in the poorest and shabbiest of all the poverty shacks in Corizel, had loved Marie long and dearly. And on Sundays in the plaza, the little dark-eyed maiden had often smiled sweetly upon him. Now Benito never told Marie that he loved her, yet all the while he was starving and slaving so that some day he might have money enough to tell her without shame.

Then it was that Toreador, the game one, the fanciest of fighting cocks, whom Benito had reared from a tiny chick, met the mighty Morro in the cock-pit, and laid him low. And many were the silver pesos which Toreador won for Benito that day. But the game one could never be pitted again, for the gaffs of the mighty Morro had darkened the spark in both his eyes.

Let it be known, too, that Benito, no longer poor after the battle, had crept up the trail toward Marie's shack in the shadow of the great white cliffs. A big bag of silver pesos was in his hand. Benito was sad because the splendid Toreador, whom he loved next to Marie, must live always in darkness after that day. Had not Toreador given his eyes that he might have Marie? But Benito thought also, as he crept up the trail, of the little dark-eyed maiden, and of joys sweet and lasting.

Slowly, very slowly, Benito crawled down once more. He had seen Marie's laughing eyes as the big cavalryman kissed her lips in the moonlight. His brain conceived no

thought of vengeance that moment, but, oh, how it throbbed and burned!

It was not long after that when Silk Redmond kicked his foot against a big bag of silver pesos as he hastened down the trail. He whistled softly and marveled. The cavalryman had not been paid for two months, but, strangely enough, the idea did not occur to Redmond to buy bottles of rum, by which he might make himself forever solid with his fellow troopers. He was not an old enough cavalryman for that.

Rapidly the tall trooper trotted down the trail. Indistinctly among the shadows and moonbeams ahead Silk Redmond saw a dark form creeping slowly toward the village. Softly he followed, clinging to the bag of silver.

Was it a sob that he faintly heard above the splashing of the Corizel? Anyway, the tall trooper forgot that taps would sound in a half hour and that cavalrymen are supposed to be in their bunks when the bugle notes are ended. He disregarded the stern order about entering the town, and cautiously followed the dark figure to the shabbiest of all shacks in the poverty district of Corizel—followed him through the very lurking-places of the noisome la viruela. And at last Silk Redmond saw Benito push open the door of his dingy hut and disappear.

Then the big cavalryman heard a piteous sound. It was the weeping of a man whose heart was breaking—poor, harmless Benito!

It was a queer moment for Trooper Redmond. There was no light but that of the moon within the shack, and

when the big soldier peered in he saw the bowed head of the Porto Rican, trembling in sorrow. And Toreador, with hurting wounds and shrunken eyes, drowsed and dreamed in the dark.

A thought crept into the head of Silk Redmond. It caused him to chase over to a store. It made him purchase a candle and return to the hut of Benito. And everybody stared hard at the tall trooper as he passed by. They knew that he had no right to be walking the streets of quarantined Corizel.

"I'm going to find out what that poor devil is 'loco' about," muttered Redmond as he tapped at the door of the shack. He held the bag of silver in one hand. In silence and solemnity the cavalryman lit the candle, and looked into the eyes of the Porto Rican. They were great, dark eyes, staring in wonderment and grief, and lustrous with tears. They moved piteously from the bag of silver to the face of the cavalryman, who came from the great land over in the northwest beyond the sea, and they grew more lustrous with tears.

Then the two talked in Spanish for many minutes. Something that was in the heart of the tall trooper—something which shone out of his eyes—soothed the sorrow of the poor Porto Rican as he told the story of Toreador, the game one, and of Marie, who lived with her mother away up toward the great white cliffs.

And one time Silk Redmond had to turn his face away so the other might not see that something which was in his eyes, for it was something which did not look well

in the eyes of a big cavalryman. Before leaving the shack Silk Redmond spoke these words in Spanish:

"Look pleasant, and do as I say, and we'll manage about the senorita. Meet me half way up the trail tomorrow at two. Fasten a grin on your face now, even if it is painful, and go to sleep. I'll do the rest, and don't let that bag of money go kicking around any old trail. Keep close to that and the grin, and I'll make you the man of that shack up there where Marie and her old woman live."

A half-hour later the tall trooper had stolen past the guard and crawled into his bunk. Then he lighted a very black pipe and began to think of young men and maidens, light and dark. And back in the college town one of the young lady students tore up a letter addressed to a big soldier, because the last page had wet spots upon it.

For six afternoons Redmond met the Porto Rican and stood over him while the latter choked down great quantities of manhood in the form of army rations.

"Get outside of those beans, they'll make a man of you. Assimilate that hunk of sow-belly, it'll sparkle in your blood." These remarks dropped out with puffs from a very black pipe.

On the sixth day Redmond brought with him a cake of "government bouquet" and a clean shirt. Then he administered unto Benito a thorough scrubbing down in the Corizel, and finally groomed him up nicely in the shirt of army blue. Puffing meanwhile, the tall trooper sur-

veyed his job and was satisfied. That evening the two walked together on the trail toward the highland shack.

And there was the same old smile for Benito. He had a well-fed, natty look, which surprised her. Silk Redmond was silent through the heavy effort of his brain.

"The American el capitan is a mighty man," he suggested finally. Benito and Marie were of the same opinion. Then the tall trooper took Marie out into the moonlight and told her many things which we all know. Meanwhile Benito clung to his grin and money-bag, and shed abroad mild Spanish commonplaces for the benefit of Marie's old mother.

"The American el capitan has made up his mind," continued Redmond, once more in the shack, "that Benito, my friend, has arrived at sufficient property and years, to hitch his fortunes to some pretty senorita. The captain has appointed me to pick out the maid." The tall trooper said all these things in Spanish.

"I have written concerning the matter to my wife," he resumed, seriously. The immensity of his fabrications tickled his throat. Marie puckered up her red lips reproachfully. "My wife, who is a very learned woman, says that Benito and Marie are twin souls, and so it must be. I will leave you now, my children——"

Benito clutched at a grin, but it was a pathetic one, and with hands that trembled, he placed the bag of silver pesos in the lap of his twin soul. The little maiden pouted at the tall trooper as he disappeared.

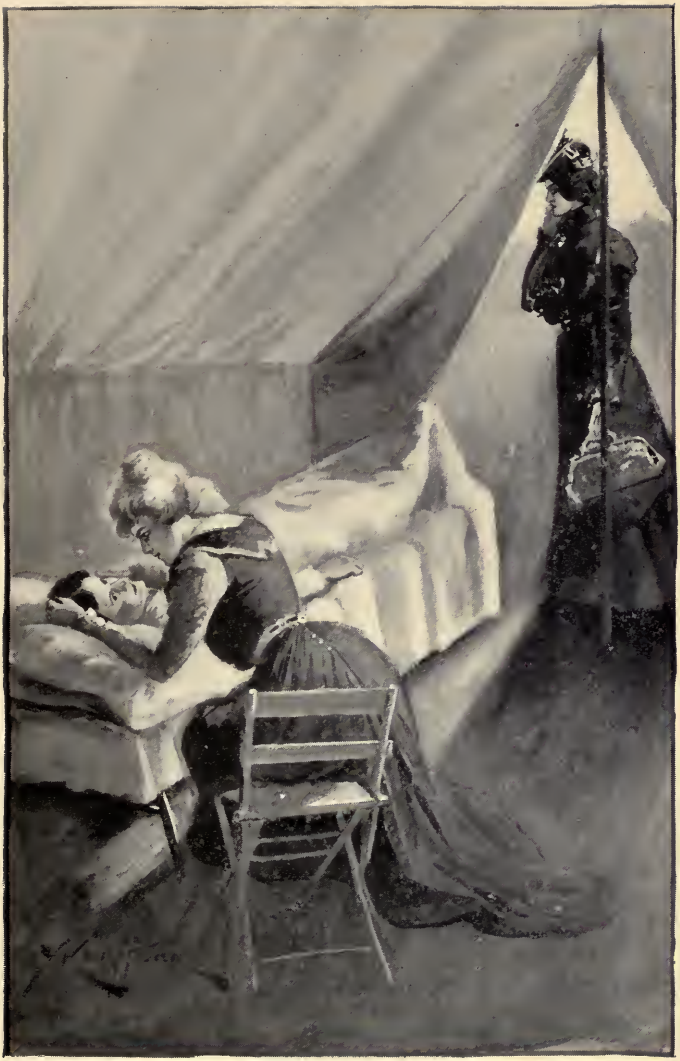
Before the night that Silk Redmond sank down on his

bunk with deathly pains in his head and back, he had the satisfaction to learn from Benito's own lips that Toreador, the game one, would shortly be moved up to the shack in the shadow of the great white cliffs.

Not many days afterward the troop commander telegraphed back to the States that Private Redmond was lying very low with smallpox. That very night, the girl who lived in the college town wrote a long letter to her big trooper. There were wet spots on every page, but she sent it, anyway.

And that letter was read to the sick soldier by a comrade in the hospital corps six days afterward. It made the tall trooper feel so strong that he lit a very black pipe for the first time in many days.

And now Toreador drowses in the darkness and dreams of the battles he has won, in the shack of Marie and Benito, far up on the trail. And in the evening the old mother of them both sits in the doorway, biding her time, while the tiny Corizel tinkles on its way to join the Rio Grande.



"She leaned her face down close to that of the cavalryman, so that he might not also see."

Two Women and a Soldier.

TWO WOMEN AND A SOLDIER.

When you see a man of wit, culture and intelligence in an awkward cavalry squad, learning the rudiments of military symmetry, you may rest assured that a story lurks behind his enlistment—that is, if the arts of peace predominate in his land at the time. There are various reasons why men enter the regular service. Chiefly among these is the desire to live by as little work as possible, and no worry. There are other men, of course, whose personality has become odious in certain sections of the country. These are not worried in the service, because a soldier is judged by his animal worth, and not by the enduring quality of his moral instinct. . . . You would not find another like Venning in the cavalry.

In a quiet way he showed his educational attainments. To every man in the troop he also revealed a courtesy which was high and inborn. Inasmuch as the new trooper possessed the form of a Spartan warrior, and a face such as the Greeks loved to picture for their gods, his fellow cavalrymen bore with his infirmities of gentle breeding.

Earth is considerably remote from some stars. The distance is not greater, however, than the distinction so-

cially between an enlisted man and a commissioned officer of a troop. The fact is well known that it is a breach of military etiquette for an officer to affiliate with a man in the ranks. It is infinitely worse than a breach for an officer's daughter to do this.

Unfortunately, the laws of nature are mightier than army regulations, and ever since the world has been made merry and sad by human attachments, young girls have become desperate over handsome men.

Captain Bishop, the troop commander, was one of the best pistol shots and one of the worst drunkards in the army. Very natural it was for such a man to have a pretty daughter. It was very natural, also, for Private Venning to be chosen orderly the first time he mounted guard. His hose and equipments were perfect; his clothing was new and fitted him; in short, he was the best looking soldier in the detail. And the best looking soldier is usually chosen for orderly.

Now, it is the duty of the orderly to shadow his commanding officer, to keep his chest thrown out, his chin drawn in, and his mouth shut—and to obey orders until relieved. Among other minor things which Venning did the next day was to stand "at attention" for four hours in a downtown café, while old Bishop waxed convivial toward himself and lenient toward men and things. During the last hour the troop commander became so popular that he felt called upon to buy drinks for everybody in the house, with the exception of his orderly, of course. It would be decidedly unsoldierly for an offi-

cer to drink in the same place with his orderly. Old Bishop was never unsoldierly.

The result was that Venning became ugly and white; in the first place, because a deep gash was rent in his pride, and, secondly, because he lost his supper. All of which shows he was not cut out for a common soldier. Had Venning possessed the proper spirit of an orderly, he would have rejoiced over his dry outing, and been proud that his captain trusted him to the extent of displaying his weaknesses before him. It can be readily seen how culture and education spoils the good soldier in a man. Finally, Venning received the barely articulate order to take his captain back to the post. There was a look upon his handsome face which was far from agreeable while the orderly helped his superior officer into a cab.

There had been no Mrs. Captain Bishop since Nellie's mother died, happy in her husband's oath of a reformation, immediate and absolute. Nellie was the pretty daughter.

It was quite late when the sentry at the entrance of the post grounds challenged the carriage. At this time Venning's military training only covered a period of six weeks, and it is not wonderful that he forgot all about it, when the dark-eyed young woman whom he had often seen on parade grounds tripped through the vestibule to the front door of the Bishop residence, where he was standing.

"I am Orderly Venning, Miss Bishop," he said slowly.

"The captain is in the carriage. If you will show me where his apartments are, I will help him there."

"Oh!" This was all that the orderly heard from the young lady's lips. Many elements were in her mind that moment. The splendid soldier whom she had so often thought about was before her. It was late. There was no one but the servants in the house, and they were asleep. She understood thoroughly the condition of her father. Being an officer's daughter, she realized fully the indignity to which this man had been subjected. She felt too degraded for herself to pity Venning. His voice thrilled in her ears. She was a very young woman.

Venning, the cavalryman, would have been a far different fellow from Venning, the civilian, had he failed to understand the pressure of the moment. He thought of a couple of circumstances which occurred when he was not clothed in army blue. He thought of a bitter lesson he had learned from a woman, who was neither so young nor so innocent as the maiden who stood in the dimly lighted vestibule. He thought how sweet and dainty the captain's daughter looked. He was tingling still from the shame in the café. Venning never was a saint. He had been a wooer many times, a student all his life, and a gentleman at all times. He was very human, however. He knew what was possible.

Captain Bishop was in a deep and noisy sleep. Nor was he disturbed in any way when the orderly lifted him from the carriage to his apartments. The young woman

led the way. Shame flushed her cheeks, and sorrow was in her dark eyes. And Venning pitied her.

"I will see that everything is cared for," he said, "and I trust you believe, Miss Bishop, that no one will hear of this."

She hastened down the stairway. Her hands trembled and her eyes were very bright. This man talked to her as an equal, she thought. He had such white, refined hands—such a noble face! And his voice was so soft and rich! Surely he was a good man and worthy, in spite of army rules. Why should she be above anybody, with a father like that—upstairs? And Miss Bishop felt an ominous smarting in her eyes, caused by all these thoughts. Suddenly she remembered something and sped into the kitchen.

Meanwhile the captain was disrobed by his orderly, who had performed similar attentions to many of his friends in civilian days, and knew the trick. His superior officer was at length adjusted comfortably in his proper place, and there was a queer smile upon the face of Venning.

"What an old beast you are!" he muttered. "How easily could I make you suffer for what you have done this night—if I cared to!"

He turned the gas down low, and tip-toed to the stairway. There he paused, listening. The thoughts in his mind could not be described. He descended whistling, which was hardly relevant.

"Orderly!" The voice reached him from behind the

drawn shades of the dining room. It was the voice of a young woman who is not certain that she is acting with judgment. The word she had uttered filled Venning with thoughts which pained. For an instant he had forgotten that he was his captain's valet. The young woman advanced timidly toward him.

That night, after the cavalryman had supped and departed, Miss Bishop crept into her father's room. The gas had been lowered until its light did not equal the blaze of a match. The captain was deeply unconscious. Everything in the room was in perfect order.

"Oh, that he should have to do such things for you," murmured the young woman. Five minutes afterward she was locked in her own apartments.

Meanwhile Venning slipped past the sentries, and up the iron stairway of the barracks to his cot. He stood in the dark by the window rolling a cigarette. Over in the captain's quarters, across the parade grounds, a light was still shining upstairs. It was not in the captain's room. When the cigarette was so short that it burned Venning's fingers the light still shone in the officer's residence. And so Trooper Venning met the daughter of his troop commander.

Four months later the command received orders to repair at once to a point of embarkation. American soldiers were needed to simplify certain matters in Cuba. Almost every day in those four months Venning had received a letter, addressed in a woman's hand. Its postmark bore the name of a Northern city.

In the deep shadow of an unused building, on the evening before the cavalrymen left for the front, there came to the daughter of Venning's troop commander a sorrow deep and lasting.

The captain was at the officers' club-rooms with the other commissioned men. The barracks was brilliantly lighted, and from its open windows Venning and the maiden could hear the songs of the soldiers. The night before men leave for the front they are always merry—as an aeronaut is before swinging off—because crowds are watching. The cavalryman and captain's daughter stood together at the wall of an old deserted barracks. Above them a great tree whispered and sighed. The man was vaguely conscious of the silent suffering in the dark eyes of the girl—of her face which was white with pain. He was conscious, too, of the moveless chill which filled his breast; but, more than all, he felt a moral strength in his brain which was strange and new. In the branches above them there was a music, low and mournful.

"Little girl," said the trooper, "I do not know what has come over me. Somehow, I am a different fellow to-night. If I had felt like this before I would never have been a cavalryman, because I could have done no wrong. . . . There, there, Nellie. I do not mean to grieve you through any stories of those other days. . . . I never thought I could hate myself so intensely for them!

"I feel too black, little girl, to be near you to-night.

I cannot help it. There was a time when I laughed at anybody who spoke of a love, strong and sweet and pure. A man who sears and bruises his conscience for years cannot tear the callous off in a night. I must be good! I must do something hard! I must get away from Venning, the animal!"

The young woman's head drooped toward the ground. The man raised it gently with both his hands upon her cheeks. His whole body seemed to be strained and tense in his effort to control the trembling of his nerves. Only a broken whisper came from his throat now.

"To-morrow we leave," he continued. "I will not write to you yet. I may never come back to this post or where you are. Little girl, I want you to be the same sweet and pure Nellie who made a man like me love you, and who made a man like me say such things as I have said this night. And remember, had I not spoken such words, my feelings would not be akin to the love which is sacred and beautiful. . . . And, Nellie, when I am man enough, you—shall—know—it!"

The branches of the great tree above them slowly swayed in the night breeze, and their shadowy deeps were full of sighings. The man and the maiden still lingered. There is silence when hearts are speaking. The man dared not touch his lips to those of the maiden, for his strength was only human. The voices of the soldiers in the barracks seemed far away now, and their laughter was hushed. At last there floated out with the radiance from the windows the strains of a mighty melody. The

voices of men, great and deep and vibrant with soul, were raised in the hymn which soldiers love—"God Be With You Till We Meet Again!"

And that night, in his cot, Venning smoked many cigarettes, and hoped that his troop would encounter fierce action, bloody action, and much of it!

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The pitiless Cuban sunshine was beating down from the sky; and from the block-house on top of the hill death flashed and screeched out of hot, dusty Mauser barrels. A wavering line of blue gasped in the heat and choked in the dust, but pushed upward toward the block-house—falling, cursing, crawling, but always upward! Squares of army blue cloth hung upon the barbed entanglements on the hillside; and dark little men with haggard faces and a strange language were prone in the trenches with the soldiers of a Northern land. And to those men who laid side by side in the trenches, international war had lost its consequence.

When the afternoon was dimmed by the deepening twilight, the block-house on the top of the hill had changed hands. And the soldiers from the Northern land who held it now were still panting from the greatness of the deed. And when the twilight was darkened by the tropical evening, the Red Cross men lighted their lanterns and crept about the trenches, peering everywhere for warmth and life.

Among those whom they found who were *not* cold was Trooper Venning.

Far below in the valley glinted the lights of Santiago, and upon the hill an American battery was placing its guns. To-morrow those guns would be uncased, and their gaping mouths would roar for cannon meat. They would dictate to the city down in the valley to-morrow.

When a man has only the life of a baby in his body, when most of his blood and all his passion has trickled out through a wound, and breathing is a burden because he is so weary—then one's whole sense is that of conscience, and one's brain gropes about among things unseen. Before Venning slept that night he saw one bright spot standing out from the gloom of the days he had lived. He had been a wooer many times, but he had only loved once. He had thought that purity and truth in a woman's mind were only for the dreams of softer moments. But the innocence of a young girl had revealed to him that a mind can be human and beautiful as well.

As the wounded cavalryman lay in the darkness hardly breathing, many ideas, long latent, were revealed to him. He knew that the impulse of sacrifice, which he had acted upon the last evening at the post, was worthy of every atom of a man. He learned that in the love which man's God smiles upon there is often a sacrifice, sad but just. Before he slept that night he knew that he had done what was best by the daughter of his captain. Against this one action there hung in the balance the whole life of a man of passion. Whether it was the years or the deed of a moment which was found wanting only Venning and his Judge knew, but the sleep which came to the

wounded soldier that night on San Juan Hill brought peace and strength.

A month afterward Venning was much stronger. He was in a big army hospital back in the States. His face had always been one which a woman would remember. It was handsome still, but white and drawn from suffering.

A well-dressed woman was just stepping out of the office at the entrance of the hospital grounds. She would have attracted a man's eye anywhere. She was the same who had written to Venning so many times, since he had been a soldier—the same who had caused him to become one. A younger woman dressed in black and carrying a hand-satchel entered the office at this moment. The one who had just stepped out heard the other inquire timidly:

"Can you tell me what ward Private Venning is in?"

The older woman quickened her steps toward one of the large tents at the far end of the grounds. Not long afterwards she was sitting by the side of Venning's cot, holding the soldier's hand. The man's eyelids were closed; the woman could hear him breathe. She believed that he was very weak still.

"How did you get away?" Venning asked. His throat was dry and his words hoarsely uttered.

"He at last concluded that we were not for each other. He was very gentlemanly about it—poor Teddy. You are all mine now, Mister Soldier." The woman was smiling merrily.

"Do you mean that he has——?"

"Don't you dare to use that ugly word!" she interrupted. The afternoon was warm and the flags of the tent were hung back. The sunlight rested upon the coverlet of Venning's cot and buried itself in the yellow hair of the woman. She placed her hand tenderly upon the soldier's forehead. His lips were white and smileless. There was silence for a moment.

"Has any other woman visited you here?"

The cavalryman opened his eyes quickly. There was pain in them, which the woman thought the wound caused.

"No other woman has visited me here."

"Oh, how ill you are still, my poor soldier! Tell me, tell me at once if you are sorry I came to you!"

The man did not answer at once. His eyes were closed. He was silently suffering.

"I thought," the woman said slowly, "I thought that when you got your sick furlough we would——"

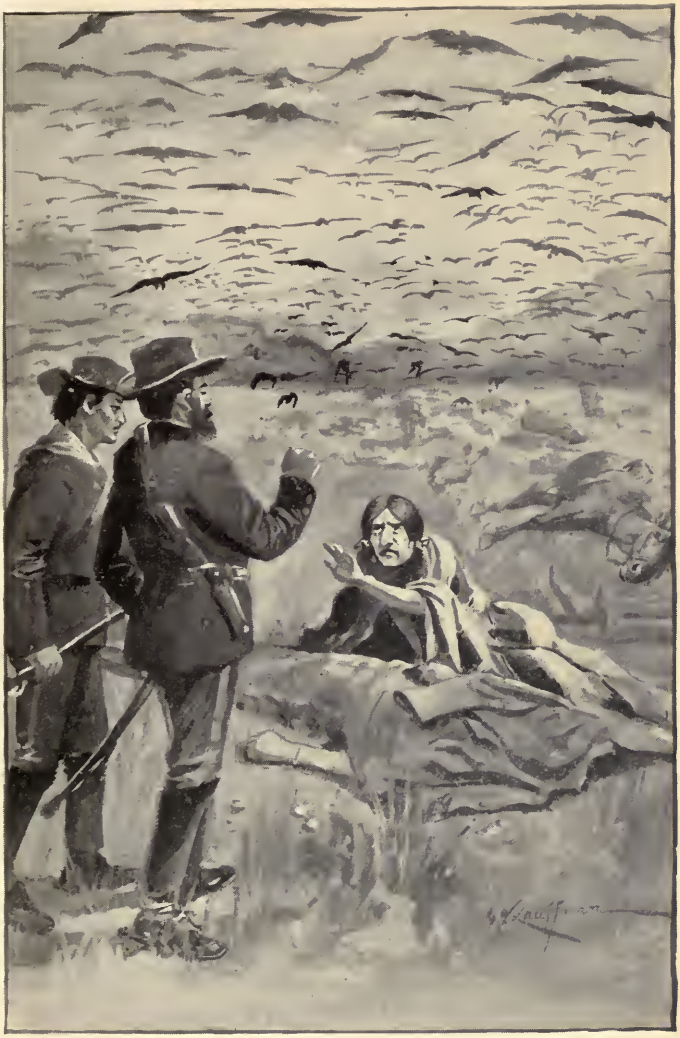
The face of the younger woman was at the far end of the tent. Her dark, wide-open eyes mirrored the suffering which was in her soul. For a moment she stood there—the only girl who had ever sounded the depths in the nature of her father's orderly.

And the woman who sat by Venning's side saw the look which was upon the face of the maiden, and she leaned her face down close to that of the wounded cavalryman, so that he might not also see. Then she smiled sweetly, for she had long since mastered the mysteries of maiden

hearts. Daintily she pressed a kiss upon the white lips of the soldier.

And when the woman raised her head the maiden in the opening was gone.

The nurse was taking the temperature of a fever patient in the farther end of the tent.



"Don't touch him." It was a squaw's voice.

Red Brennan of the Seventh.

RED BRENNAN OF THE SEVENTH.

Dad Evans told the tale. He is an old cavalryman, born with a saddle between his thighs—a soldier by temperament and a man instinctively. Old Dad has served thirty years, but he was so miserable away from the troop that they took him back in spite of his dimmed eyes and chalky joints.

Rebellion memories are rampant in Dad Evans' mind. He was a tough little bow-legged cavalryman then. A dozen Indian fights are shown on his discharge papers. And then he was one of those boys who left their horses back in the States and pushed up the sand-soaked hills in front of Santiago, the once coveted.

But there is one scene which Old Dad's eyes looked upon when they were not dim—a scene which appears again when his pipe is lit and his bunk is comfortable—a scene and a story, which Dad Evans does not tell except at the canteen, when his month's pay flows with his words.

Then he will tell you about Rain-in-the-Face, the ugliest of the Sioux, and the craftiest of red men, and about the deserter from the ranks of Uncle Sam's horsemen who was chained to him. He will tell you how Indians fight,

how impish was the fury of their squaws, how terrible their numbers. And all cavalrymen forget the glasses in their hands while Dad Evans tells how the field looked, when he helped to bury the dead of Custer's band way out in Montana on that hot June day.

Ask any old cavalryman what kind of a fellow was the Michigan man whom the Sioux called Yellow Hair. He was a soldier they will say, not an indulgent officer, but one who feared nothing living or dead. It was Custer who declared:

"Give me my regiment and I will lick the whole Sioux Nation."

Custer was tingling to make his name illustrious when he uttered those words. He was confident, experienced—a soldier born. He did not think then that his regiment of horsemen would ever be called the "Unlucky Seventh." But all this has been committed to memory by school children. Here is the story of Red Brennan, deserter, once in I troop of Custer's command, and long since dead—the story which Dad Evans tells. It is a true story, for Dad Evans, who saw it enacted, says so.

Brennan was a bad man. His worst enemies were whisky and himself. His bunk was deserted one morning at reveille roll-call, and his troop was detached to hunt him up. The boys found him in a cave, to which they were led by an Indian scout. Brennan was helplessly obfuscated, probably through the medium of unmellowed corn-juice. The Indian scout shuffled about the cave feeling and smelling things. There were puzzling circum-

stances about. Some one had been in the cave with Brennan, but the identity of this party was an opaque mystery. Nothing but a can of bear's grease was found. Squaws make their braids shiny with bear's grease. A soldier suggested that Kate Poison-Water had perhaps taken Brennan for her paramour.

When the prisoner staggered out of stupor, he was chained to Rain-in-the-Face, sub-chief of the Sioux. At first he uttered a series of ejaculations that would have plunged an army mule into hysterics.

* * * * * * * *

Kate Poison-Water was a sort of De Stael among the Sioux. She was a serpent in cunning, a tigress in strength and agility—a Sioux squaw in general deviltry. It developed that Rain-in-the-Face knew her.

Custer was in a land ridden with red men. He had no near reserve. It was not a time for courtmartials. Red Brennan ate and slept, but did not become chummy with the rising buck. They were together until the day when Reno took part of the regiment and branched off to the south. Rain-in-the-Face was taken with Reno, while Brennan rejoined his troop in Custer's division. It is needless to say in whose command was Dad Evans, for had he not been with Reno he would never have sipped canteen beer and told stories these times, nor would he have climbed Cuban hills under Mauser fire.

The guard in charge of the Sioux prisoner was murdered in the night. It was done so quietly that the sentry, walking his post fifty yards away, heard no sound and

saw nothing. Then Dad Evans told of a way the body was mutilated—so horrible were his words that we turned away shuddering.

"Only a squaw does the trick," Evans explained. "We thought Kate Poison-Water had made possible the escape of Rain-in-the-Face, because of the manner of the deed. This idea grew upon us. Meanwhile, that day of history dawned."

Custer's command was four miles from Reno's camp. Every trooper felt that there were hordes of red men in the surrounding foothills. Not a white man guessed their numbers. The Indian scouts were puzzled by cross trails. They hugged the vanguard and could not be pushed ahead. The troopers were attentive and quiet. No jests were exchanged that morning. The sun rose high and hot. The wind blew strong and fitfully. No steady or rapid firing was distinguishable from any direction. Reno's division formed skirmish lines. No. 4 in each set stayed back with the horses. Ragged volleys were poured down upon them from rocks and woody places. Few of the fours lived when the sun's rays were slanting that afternoon. Camp was struck at sundown. No bacon sputtered in the mess tins, and weary soldiers rolled themselves in their blankets without a smoke that night. The Red Cross men did not sleep.

No one believed the courier who rode into camp before midnight, with the word that Custer and all his band had been slain that day by the Sioux, and that their bodies lay scattered about in the moonlight four miles away.

Before daybreak Reno's men were on the march. The silence in front was deathly and ominous. Wary and cautious was the advance. The weird, crooning monotone of the Indian death song was not heard, nor were cross trails encountered this day. The turf was marked with mute indications of a hasty flight. The scouts hugged closely the forward fours. The silence frightened them. An odor was in the air which they alone distinguished. White men cannot use their noses like animals.

The body of a trooper, gashed, perforated and dismembered, was strewn across the line of march. Hard and unsmiling were the faces of Reno's cavalrymen now. Signals from high points brought back no answer from Custer's corps. The troops paused again to cover up red stains upon the earth. The words of the courier were now partially believed. Great and awful thoughts were crawling into the soldiers' minds. Where was Yellow Hair, the intrepid, the invincible? Where were the friends of yesterday?

More blood in the path. Tainted was the air that men breathed and ghastly white their faces.

A low hill stretched before them. Upon its summit shimmered the pitiless heat. Flies buzzed about the sweating horses, and great, black birds made circling shadows beyond the hill.

Soldiers tried not to breathe the sickening air, yet they advanced. Horror and fascination enthralled them. Countless red devils might be marshaling in the surrounding hills, yet the most despicable of cowards would have

pressed upward that day. Still persons claim to be above that curiosity which is morbid. The vanguard rode upon the summit of the hill and looked down.

For a moment all that could be heard was the droning of the myriad insect wings. Then to the ears of the rear troopers was borne the murmur of curses deep and dreadful.

From every bush arrows had whizzed down upon that plain. From behind every rock and tree a crouching Sioux had glared through the smoke of powder. Squads of painted, yelling, exultant fiends had ridden down every passable place on the hills—yesterday.

And when the braves had left no horse or horseman standing, young bucks trampled the white faces into the earth and fired into the prone bodies. And when their voices were hoarse and broken, and their demon desires satiated, the hideous, mumbling squaws, more inhuman than any in venomous hate, had stripped the suits of army blue from the boys no longer in Uncle Sam's service. Then, in hellish ecstasy, they used their knives.

Meanwhile the braves wrapped up their dead in blankets and tied them in the branches of larger trees. Not until the sunset land was growing dim did the red men face toward it and disappear. They were very happy.

Reno's cavalrymen looked down. Great, black birds rose and hovered over the plain. The sky above the hills was dotted with others—coming. Dad Evans will never forget that day.

Not a vestige of individuality remained with the dead

upon the plain. There was not a scalp—not a form left intact, save two. So diabolical was the work that it seemed as if the devil in a black humor had directed it. Dad Evans told things that would not do here.

In the centre of the plain they found a prone body that had not been stripped or mutilated. The broad yellow stripe of a cavalry officer was upon the trousers. An officer's blouse covered the face. The Sioux warriors had crossed the sleeves as a sign that the body should be spared. The blouse was lifted and then the men saw the bold, lean face of their commanding officer. The cheek was pressed down, and the long, light brown curls clustered about it. Not a hair was touched, not a weapon taken.

The Sioux braves feared the living Yellow Hair. They revered him dead. It was a moment of delicate mystery. Thus it was that his own men found Custer, the soldier from Michigan. And not long afterward a little Michigan town was shrouded in crepe. The black draperies have been lifted these many years, but its sable shadow still rests in the hearts of the people.

Not a scalp was left save two. There was another.

"Don't touch him!" It was a squaw's voice. She was wounded, crazed, dying. She raised her body on one hand and fought off Reno's cavalrymen. Below her was another body with sleeves crossed. It was all that remained of Red Brennan, deserter, and the dying squaw, Kate Poison-Water, was fighting for it.

Side by side almost lay the commanding officer and

the man from the ranks, a deserter once. These alone out of many troops had been untouched by the Sioux squaws.

Kate Poison-Water slew the guard and released Rain-in-the-Face, the soldiers say, so that the sub-chief might have Red Brennan spared in the projected attack. None but the Great Spirit, however, could have saved Red Brennan that day.

Yes, the Sioux was a happy nation when they retreated. Their craft was not forgotten and the trails diverged. One was two miles wide. What squadron of cavalry could follow such a trail?

Rain-in-the-Face, sub-chief of the victorious Sioux, lived to glower into the faces of distinguished Eastern audiences.

And old Dad Evans, who helped to bury the dead among feasting vultures on that hot June day, still sips canteen beer and tells stories.

A Soldier of Misfortune.

A SOLDIER OF MISFORTUNE.

Nobody loved Duffie. Anyway not until he went to Porto Rico. None of the boys cared a rap for him even then. Yet Duffie was a good soldier—a man who is always sober enough to answer calls, keep his equipments polished, and his face shaved is a good soldier. At least from an officer's point of view, and that's what counts. But like many another choice spirit, Private Duffie was totally devoid of those twin faculties, which show off one's better side and make friends. And since this trooper possessed the added misfortune of being ugly to look upon, his fellow soldiers took no trouble to sound him for a better side.

Duffie had never been able to say the proper thing at the proper time, so he did what was next best—kept his mouth shut. This became a habit with him in early life. Now a silent man is not wanted for a "bunkie" in Uncle Sam's cavalry.

Duffie gambled also—a soldierly trait, and one which would hurt no man's reputation in his troop, but since he won calmly, steadily and silently, he was not asked to sit at every pay-day game. Next to Duffie's silence, his worst

trait in the trooper's eyes was that he did not spend his gains.

And the natural sequence of all these things was that not one of his eighty-odd fellows shed tears when Duffie left the troop with his final statements in his pocket, and a record of thirteen years in the service—thirteen honest, faithful, clean years. It was not until Duffie and his bundle were lost in the coffee shrubs which bordered the trail down into Corizel that the troop clerk told one of the sergeants that Duffie's final statements called for a cool thousand, *Americano Dinero.* When the men heard this they told each other that they were well rid of Duff, his "system," his silence, and his "ugly phiz."

As a matter of fact, Duffie's gambling methods were as honest as his clear, gray eyes. And if his other two five-year enlistments had been looked up his old fellows would have said that he quit their outfits with only a month's pay in his clothes; and that he was as hopeless a drunkard and as reckless a spender as any good trooper is supposed to be. They would say, too, that he left few friends and no debts behind.

Duffie, walking down the trail, communed with himself and was not unhappy. On his discharge paper, after the printed word "CHARACTER" his captain had written "excellent," and the troop physician had scrawled the same word after "PHYSICAL CONDITION WHEN DISCHARGED." By the paper we might learn also that his hair was red, his eyes gray and his age thirty-five. And everybody

knows that Duffie upon showing his discharge, could re-enlist in any outfit in the service.

This wasn't his idea. He had money. He vowed that he would touch no drink until he reached the States—hence he would have money then—enough to be a civilian. But there was a secret in the brain of the discharged cavalryman that day—a pleasant, thrilling secret, more important by far than the finals which would be cashed in San Juan, more important than the captain's estimate of his character. It was the secret which creeps into the brain and heart of every soldier some day; and many are the army men who would have died in the Soldiers' Home were it not for its spell.

Now any person who has been in Porto Rico will tell you that the native senoritas have wonderful eyes. The American soldier who did not become impressed with this fact during his first hour on shore, was either on sick report at the time or else he landed in the night. A close observer will tell you also that the wonderful eyes of the Porto Rican senoritas dwell lingeringly upon the length and breadth and toughness of American manhood clad in army blue. All of which couldn't be otherwise.

The point is that Senorita Euphrasie, the dark, delicate and dreamy-eyed, should look into the plain face of Trooper Duffie, and care to look again. This was strange, certainly. Perhaps the Corizel maiden saw something in those clear, gray eyes which no American woman, save the mother of her boy, had ever seen; something which no fellow-trooper cared to know about, since Duffie was

too clumsy of speech to speak what was in him. Gradually in the cavalryman's brain the secret grew. It imparted a sensation, which the lonely trooper never dreamed would come to him. For Duffie knew he was not handsome to look upon. It made him feel less of a drunkard and more of a man. It made him hate the service in time of peace—a woman's influence has done this ever since armies have been. In short, this secret buoyed up to surface water all the brighter, better elements in Duffie's nature. And Senorita Euphrasie saw the brighter side, knew that it was for her—and was a very happy little maiden.

Meanwhile Duffie's halting tongue struggled with Spanish expressions, but her eyes told Euphrasie more which she wanted to know; and in her turn, Euphrasie repeated English words from the cavalryman's lips—words which those lips had never uttered before. And the day drew nearer which would end Duffie's "soldiering" forever.

The one desire of the discharged trooper as he descended the trail into Corizel—apart from the will and pleasure of Senorita Euphrasie—was to see once more his native land. This is the heart's desire of every trooper and infantryman in Porto Rico to-day! That afternoon, when for the first time in three years he was a free man, Duffie told the Corizel maiden of the wonderful land over the sea, of the great cities, and of the white, frozen showers which fall in the Northland. He told her of his old mother who would love her, even as she loved her son.

Poor Duffie did not know well of that which he spoke. And Euphrasie believed his words. She would have followed him through the dreariest of the world's distances—to his home.

Duffie will never forget the enchantment of that night. Faintly from the quarters up the trail was borne the bugle call for retreat. The man heard the distant scream of the trumpet, but he only held Euphrasie closer. It was a weird sensation for the soldier-no-longer. The sergeant would not call his name that night. Duffie's heart held no regret—it held nothing that moment but the image of the woman into whose eyes he gazed, while the mounting moon scattered the twilight in the low southeast. How happy would those two have been if the man felt not the beckoning of his native shores, and the yearning of his mother's heart!

The next day Euphrasie left Corizel and the orange-perfumed slopes—lingered one last moment to listen to the song of the mountain river, then journeyed thither toward San Juan—*el capital*—with her husband.

A white man cannot disregard social usages where other white men are. No, not even if he is a self-supporting institution. It matters not the slightest whether a man cares more for a look from his wife than for a grasp upon the throttle of the mammoth social engine. If Duffie had known the woes of the man who dares transgress upon unconventional boundaries—the woes of even a poor ex-soldier—he could not have been driven from the isl-

and where there are few white people, and therefore few conventionalities.

It was hardly a question of color, for Euphrasie was not dark. Indeed, had she possessed the power to sell the richness and softness from her skin, she would have realized enough to live luxuriously for life. But Euphrasie wore no hat, only a shawl. Her gowns were very pretty for her own summer land, but they would not have suited an American woman. She spoke little English. But a thousand times worse than anything else —she was the wife of a common enlisted man! And there were wives of commissioned officers on the transport!

Everything was done so quickly in San Juan. A ship bound for the States was in the harbor. Before Duffie had cashed his finals, the sailing flag was hoisted. He had barely time to get his wife on board. He realized vaguely that Euphrasie needed woolen clothing and much of it, before leaving a tropical island for a land of winter. But how was he, who knew nothing which pertained not to an enlisted man's life, supposed to realize in a moment that there are such things as officers' wives and conventionalities on a transport?

Euphrasie was a timid maiden. So many soldiers frightened her, and, worse than that, she perceived that her husband was uneasy, too. His knowledge of Spanish fled from him.

And the American ladies up on the pure white bridge, and on the saloon deck, where none but the shoulder-

strapped and their ladies walked—these women turned their eyes from the Porto Rican city, which was vanishing behind harbor mists, and they saw the timid native maiden, shrinking close to the form of a big enlisted man, whose face was not pleasant.

Then one of these American ladies voiced the sentiments of the rest—God forgive them—and it was the master of the ship who was forced to hear her say that she would not eat at the same table with any native maiden; that she thought it was an outrage for an enlisted man to dare bring such a woman on a ship with American ladies; that she for one would at least see that such a woman staid in the part of the ship she deserved. The captain of the ship, being a commissioned officer, the same as this lady's husband—well, what could he do but admire Duffie's good taste and refuse him a state-room for his wife? How could he furnish her meals the same as saloon passengers?

Far more than Euphrasie did the big ex-cavalryman, the silent man, suffer, because the Corizel maiden had to sleep down in the hammock-hold with the soldiers. Little, indeed, did she mind eating army rations, for women in her land eat little at best; but her husband's face grew white when he thought of all these things, and there was a nasty gleam in his gray eyes.

In a canvas hammock, down in the dirty hold of a transport, surrounded by scores of men, rough and uneducated, lots of them—yet Euphrasie, the wife, was just as safe as she ever had been among her own native hills.

Yes, they were rough and uneducated, lots of them, but they were Americans and soldiers; and they had heard what the women up on the bridge had told the master of the ship.

In the forward hold the men cursed carelessly and without restraint, cursed and gambled and sang soldier songs; but in the rear, where Euphrasie was, they walked on tip-toe and talked in whispers while she slept. And the ex-cavalryman who loved her, thanked his fellows one and all with his eyes. The Porto Rican maiden was not among gentlemen—they were all upon the saloon deck with their ladies. Euphrasie's companions were only a lot of common men from the ranks.

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Everybody knows what a winter gale off Hatteras is. The most treacherous bit of sea water on the Atlantic lies here. Vessels from tropical isles veer hundreds of miles seaward to avoid the Northern Carolina gales, and those who have lived long under a torrid sun shrink from the first blast of winter. Up on the bridge and saloon decks the American ladies, wrapped in furs, emerged from their state-rooms and set their faces toward the icy winds. And Euphrasie in her summer gowns shivered and coughed down in the chilly hold.

Duffie would tell her that there was no winter in the great Southwest where his home was. And the dark, dreamy eyes of the Corizel maiden would grow wondrous bright when she heard her husband tell of his old mother, who would love her, and of the little store they would

start near some army post, and sell tobacco and cigarettes and other things the soldiers liked. When no one was looking Duffie would show his *senora* the great roll of American money, with which he would buy her warm clothing and lots of nice things in New York. There would be no cold or suffering for Euphrasie after that!

When the hammock shook with the maiden's coughing, as the transport tumbled along the Northern Carolina coast, Duffie would wrap his big, yellow-lined cavalry overcoat more closely about her throat, and his face became more haggard and white, but there was naught but tenderness in his eyes now. Meanwhile, the gale grew noisy, and ice thickened on the hurricane deck.

Two days' run from New York, and there was a dark flush upon Euphrasie's cheek. Her forehead was burning, and the soldiers stepped softly in the hold. And in the night the Porto Rican maiden clung fast to her husband's hand, and murmured words about Corizel and love. There was a reddish glow in her dark eyes, like a flame shining through a black density of smoke. They were turned immovably upon the white, horrified face of her husband, and she spoke his name.

About the time the ice-crusted ship was sighted off the Atlantic Highlands two fever convalescents died of pneumonia in the forward hold—died within sight of the land of their soldier dreams.

And while the transport steamed around Sandy Hook the hand of the Porto Rican maiden slipped from Duffie's grasp.

The commissioned officers stood by the vessel's side in the pier and kept the soldiers back until the American ladies had tripped down the gangway. And one of the ladies saw two gray eyes riveted upon her that wild winter's day. She remembered those eyes and the hideous pallor of the man's face for many long nights afterward, which was well.

What Duffie did the next ten days any soldier will guess. At the end of that time he sent what money there was left to his old mother down in Texas. And not long after that he set out for the other side of the world to join his regiment in Manila.

Such is the story of a flower from a summer land—a flower which withered beneath the icy breath. And the heart of Trooper Duffie, soldier of misfortune, withered with it.

Shadow and the Cherub.

SHADOW AND THE CHERUB.

The first time I saw Shadow was the night the Fifth pulled out for Porto Rico. Shadow was a dusky kid of quality, and he now wears a cavalryman's blouse and a shirt of army blue. How this came about involves the prejudices of a nation.

Shadow was not old enough to be subservient. The knowledge that he was black had never hurt him yet. But his father was a son of slavery, and his father's father, so in Shadow's nature there was mildness and long-suffering, and in his back a bow to people with white faces. It was a bow, not a cringe—a pleasant sensation of obeying, not fawning humility.

But cavalrymen from the land where cotton blooms, and persimmon trees flourish in every strip of woodland, make no distinction. And many are the cavalrymen in Uncle Sam's service who hail from localities where negroes are hired now, and hated. But there are others who punched cattle and straddled cow-ponies west of the Mississippi and not so far south as the Rio Grande; and others still who lived once where negroes are seldom

seen, and are liked for their jollity and devil-take-care-of-to-morrow dispositions. And these took notice of Shadow in spite of black looks and murmurings.

There was a funny twinkle in his dark eyes and a wondering pucker in his full red lips. Old Chicken, the farrier, first took him under his wing. It was the night before leaving the States, and the regiment had been paid earlier in the day.

Now every officer knows that a common soldier works with greatest dispatch and efficiency when broke. It was a grand demonstration of mettle that the cavalrymen gave that day. Each man assisted in pushing frightened and fractious horses up a steep gangway, and in loading mountains of heavy luggage on the transports for many hours —and all under the strain of a cavalryman's thirst with a month's pay in his pocket.

Everything was ready when night came, except the blessed tide. It would be four hours at least, the sailors said, before the troop-ship dare cross the bar. Had it not been for this mysterious and accommodating element the Fiftn Cavalry would have lugged their whole month's pay about cheerlessly throughout a long voyage. This would have been unprecedented. It would have been positively uncanny.

"It's dangerous to let them go," one lieutenant said; "some will never come back."

"Let them go," said an old captain, who had risen from the ranks, and who was no stranger to pity.

"You ought to know, captain, how duty looks and time passes to a soldier on pay-day," the lieutenant replied weakly. He was talking to his superior officer.

"Let them go," repeated the captain, and the boys went to town with money intact and great responsibilities tingling in their breasts. All came back save one, who was not a drinking man, and who had lost a sweetheart back in San Anton', but not in Porto Rico.

It was in those four hours that Old Chicken found Shadow. The first time I saw him was a half hour before the time of embarkation. He was sitting in the darkness on the lee side of the great ship. Above him flickered meaningless lights and a shadowy mystery of ropes and rigging. Below him the chocolate-hued Savannah playfully slapped the big piers and the transport's plated sides. Beyond him lay the sea, trackless, dark and vast.

Two large bottles of something protruded from Shadow's blouse. Smaller bottles of something protruded from Shadow's many pockets. Hampers of other good things surrounded him; and, very strange to tell, Wild Bill, the most dissolute and prodigal of troop tom-cats, purred cozily upon his lap.

But most inconceivable of all was the attitude of Cherub, the untamable—Cherub, the vicious and massive-jawed bloodhound—for several years a chattel of Troop K. Cherub's hatred for civilians was depthless and dreadful.

Then why should he put his great, ugly head upon Shadow's lap and there rest so quietly and peaceably?

"Yo an' me is dun 'guine to Porto Ric, an' pussie-tom and Old Chick is dun 'guine. Doan' shake yo' big hade dat-a-way. I is aguine cos Old Chick dun sade I could. We alls 'guine to Porto Ric, and de horses."

Shadow's head was very close to Cherub's jaws while he was muttering these words. Then he began to croon a quaint melody which the Old Mammy days had left behind in his kinky head. Cherub yawned in lazy contentment, Wild Bill purred hoarsely, and I watched, wondering.

Meanwhile the cavalrymen returned with laughter and great happiness. Then the big troop-ship cast her log and veered seaward. There were shouts but no sentiment. Good cavalrymen—the ones who win chevrons in their first enlistment—have no sentiment. A recruit possessed of sentiment will lose it in the first three months, or else apply for his discharge.

There was much of this element in Shadow's nature. The horsemen, with their spurs, six-shooters and sabers, made a deep impression. A queer, dreamy look was in his eyes as he gazed out to sea and hummed softly, while a tiny gale from the tropics zipped merrily by. The little dusky boy was glad that he met Old Chick, the farrier, glad that he was with such "strong, big men"—vaguely glad that he lived. Cherub, the bloodhound, growled at the wind and glared at the sea and kept close to Shadow's side. Wild Bill cuddled closely.

"Here, nigger, take hold of this mop and scrub out.

That's all you people are good for anyway. Grab a root, and grab it quick."

This was only part of what the sergeant from the South said the first morning out. The whole was more brutal. The sergeant was sick from the sea and sick from the night before on land. We, from the North, saw Shadow's trouble and tried to put him right. But something went wrong in the dusky boy's mind that morning which we could not put right.

You have all read of transport horrors. Perhaps you have heard, too, of the sufferings of the splendid troop horses and about the troopers themselves on a voyage.

Where the air is scented with sage brush and the eyes smart with alkali; from the blizzards of Dakota and the sun-baked plains of Texas—the cavalrymen come. They are landsmen. They march through dust-clouds and race through rainstorm, but they droop when on board a rolling ship. Their bowed legs fit equally well to the back of a mustang or a Wales, but they will not adjust themselves to a swaying hurricane deck.

Twenty feet below the surface of the sea are the air-tight and cold storage compartments. Other compartments, where hundreds of hammocks are swung in tiers, are above this. When the hatches are closed this second deck is also air-tight. Here 600 cavalrymen sleep. A sheet-iron flooring above them forms the bottom of the stables, and the steel-shod hoofs of the troop horses make a din for the ears of those below like that of many boiler

factories. Another tier of horses, and then one sees the daylight and feels the ocean breeze.

Ten hours in the black hole would kill horses and some people of olden times, but it only gives headaches to American cavalrymen. It was sad, though, to watch the men trying to put nerve and strength in the horses they loved—the drooping, dying troop-horses. It was very sad to see the animals hang their heads out into the draughtless passageway, and distend wider their crimson nostrils. Their eyes were filmy and opaque—very unnatural and pitiful, and their lower lips hung low and quivered on the fourth day out.

Then the hoisting-gear became very busy, and men grew sick when they heard the rattle of loosening chains and so many loud splashes from the sea below. Five days out, and there was more room in the stables for the suffocating troop horses still on their feet. Their limbs were swollen now and stiff. The air in the stables was deathly and heavy.

"Another horse down!" cries the stable guard, and the hoisting-gear creaks again.

A strange, ugly mood possessed Cherub, the bloodhound, these days. He refused food, and was often heard growling ominously from dark places. He occasionally walked the upper deck, but was a friend to no one except Shadow. Long after taps, when all save ship lights were out, and the cavalrymen swung and sweltered in their hammocks, Cherub was heard growling and skulking about in the darkness. And his eyes shone with a baleful

glitter. Then Shadow would go to him, and for a time Cherub would rest.

The dusky boy was sad. The sentiment had been torn from him and an ugly wound was left behind. For the men from the North, Shadow would have been a martyr. The others he feared and tried bravely to serve.

"Shadow's no good on dis ship," he said on the morning of the fifth day. "We hated—can't do right—pussy's tom's cross an' Cherub's crazy sick—ought to be back—wiv' the niggers."

Many a sob with the preceding made it almost incoherent. It was no morbid melancholy, but a helpless, hopeless expression of grief. No man would have smiled had he been present—poor little heartbroken Shadow!

Even as I was thinking of men, black and white, the souls unsoiled, my ears were filled with the roar of a brute. It came from the deck below. There was something hideous and fear-inspiring about it. I never heard such a sound. Cherub never made such a sound before. Yet I knew it came from his throat.

The cavalrymen lounging and laughing upon deck stood erect now and felt for the six-shooters in their belts. But the weapons were all stacked below in the hammock compartment by special order. Again was heard the cry of a tortured beast. Shadow moved toward the sound very slowly. Soldiers and sailors were running and shouting on the deck below.

"Cherub is mad! Shoot the brute! Look out up there!"

All these words we heard. Then Cherub dashed up the companionway, his chains dragging behind. His fangs were horrible to see.

A sailor in his way was thrown over, and to-day there is an ugly scar on his throat. Others were bitten. Shadow was speaking in a low voice we could not understand. The bloodhound and the boy were close together. We, who were watching, shuddered. Slowly, cautiously, a dark hand moved out and grasped the chain. The red, flashing orbs of the brute lowered from Shadow's gaze. We hoped no more when the bloodhound growled.

Without haste, seemingly, the dark hand holding the chain moved toward the halyards. The fingers worked swiftly for a moment, but how long it seemed to us!

Then like a flash Shadow was beyond the length of the chain, and laughing like one whose nerve is gone. Cherub beat his body upon the deck and upon the halyards.

We were in the tropics where there is no cure for canine madness; Cherub did not roar or suffer long, and for him Shadow, who loved all things small and great, wept long.

But out of that grief there came to the heart of the little dusky boy a joy sweet and lasting, for somehow the men from the South who stood upon the hurricane deck that day forgot pride and prejudice.

And now the troop is scouring the mist-hung hills of Porto Rico—peering into caves, and searching lonely highland shacks—for Spaniards who were once soldiers and now guerrillas.

Shadow is with them, and there is not a horseman in the troop who would not charge through leaden hail to save him from harm. And only when the men talk of Cherub, the vicious and massive-jawed, does the darkey boy look away and seem unhappy.

Back to San Anton'.

BACK TO SAN ANTON'.

Nobody thought that old Geldez would remember the thrashing Mulgowan gave him. Not a man in the troop would have given old Geldez credit for fiendish contrivings. It wasn't because he was a drunken wretch and a beggar by nature that made the boys hate him. Old Geldez was a greaser, which implies everything weakly, malevolent and detestable, and it was said that he was in the habit of beating the little maiden of dark eyes who called him father. A civilian greaser was old Geldez—what could be more despised?

Yet many a pay-day would have known no muscal, and been correspondingly cheerless, had it not been for old Geldez, who often weighted his boat down with Mexican wines and paddled softly across the Rio Grande, with nobody watching but the moon, all of which is contrary to the laws of a mighty nation. It is true that the troopers paid many prices to the greaser, but muscal is cheap at any cost on pay-days.

Now Mulgowan was a sergeant in rank, but at heart he was never anything but a private and the prince of good fellows. Because he could vault the highest horse in the troop and make no specialty of it; because he could

fight like a demon and yet did not make it a pastime, and because he was a wizard with a six-shooter and a whirlwind with a saber, Mulgowan was a very popular cavalryman.

So when Geldez swore gruffly at the little maiden of dark eyes one pay-day, while the boys were drinking muscal in his place, Mulgowan was only praised because he kicked the greaser out of his own door. Indeed the boys were so facetious about the affair that Mulgowan felt called upon to crack a fresh bottle of wine. He filled all the glasses himself and then toasted the maiden of dark eyes with all the tenderness which much wine and natural gentility could put into words.

About this time the ugly face of old Geldez peered through the window. It was so ugly in its pallid rage that Mulgowan's hand felt instinctively for the six-shooter in his belt. It was so very ugly and white that the maiden of dark eyes threw her bare, brown arms about Mulgowan's neck and wept just as white women do. And then Mulgowan became very red because he did not know much about such proceedings, but he kissed the little Mexican maiden, after which another fellow cracked a bottle of wine. Meanwhile old Geldez outside plotted dark deviltry.

After that the greaser's girl belonged to Mulgowan just the same as his horse. And Mulgowan's horse loved him, but not in the same way as did the dark eyes of the San Anton' valley.

Women are different creatures the night before a regi-

ment pulls out. They tell you things that you never heard from their lips before. They talk to you alone. They are pretty in their gaiety, bewitching in their silence, quite womanly in their tears, and adorable. The last night at the San Anton' barracks was memorable. The regiment was ready to laugh or cry. Promises were made. Mulgowan danced with dark eyes, and later they strolled out into the moonlight together. And old Geldez watched them and plotted still.

Historical novels have been written upon the reasons why regiments were ordered out a short time ago. There were few happier men than Mulgowan in the troop at any time, but while we were pushing on to the front he couldn't sleep for furious spirits. The "front" is any place on the borderland of God's country and some other place where something is expected to drop at any moment. We arrived. Not many hours afterward Mulgowan became a changed man and a spoiled trooper.

It happened in the morning just after the mail was brought in. When one opens a package in a cavalry camp he takes chances on being seen. One of the drawbacks of the service is that the state of blessed solitude is unattainable. It was a small package such as jewels are sent in. It was unregistered. A human finger, dry and cold, was in the box. Mulgowan did not swear, which was unnatural. The skin upon his face became colorless. He dropped the thing. The trooper nearest looked at it intently and then at his own hands.

"Left third finger," he remarked.

"Is it a woman's?" Mulgowan asked in a stifled voice. His face was turned away.

"Must belong to a woman or a kid," was the answer. "Cheer up, Mul."

That evening after retreat we saw Mulgowan sitting alone in the shadowy twilight. His eyes seemed to look backward toward San Anton'. He did not even smoke. We hated to say anything. After a while Mulgowan walked along the picket line until he came to his own horse. Then he stopped and whispered for a long time close to the fancy, little gelding's ear, an action on his part which made the youngster Yellow Hair very happy, indeed.

And long after taps had sounded I rolled over on my bunk and peered out from under the raised walls of the tent. The moon was high and there were no shadows. Mulgowan still stood on the picket line. His fingers of one hand were tangled in the mane of Yellow Hair, and his eyes were turned backward toward San Anton'. The stable guard walked his post and whistled low.

Three days afterward another package was handed to Mulgowan, and when it was opened we saw another third finger belonging to a woman or a boy. It was the third finger of a right hand this time, and it was dry and cold. Mulgowan's face did not change, because it had been haggard and white for three days.

What the youngster Yellow Hair was told that night no one else ever knew. He looked very wise and thoughtful while his master stood by his head just before taps

sounded. And after that, when all troopers slept, Mulgowan stole away. Yellow Hair never told that his master had gone back to the dark eyes of the San Anton' valley.

After reveille roll-call the next morning the first sergeant approached the troop commander, saluted and said:

"Sergeant Mulgowan missing, sir."

The troop commander strolled over to headquarters, saluted several times, and reported to the officer of the day:

"Sergeant Mulgowan missing, sir."

Among other things which telegraph operators pounded out that same morning was, "Sergeant Mulgowan missing." And the old greaser, Geldez, away back in San Anton' heard the same words repeated, and his face became a dirty yellow hue, and people never saw him in the San Anton' valley after that day.

A recruit in the troop, who was old enough to know better, spoke out loud and at length about time-of-war deserters, and incidentally remarked that such did not deserve a military funeral. We, who stood near, listened until the youth had finished his observations, then we applied our muscular selves toward making him regret his words. The troop was broken up, for it loved Mulgowan and was proud of him. Meanwhile the fancy, little gelding Yellow Hair whinnied softly and often and pawed the turf with his front hoofs.

The rest of the story, all except the ending, was told me. They said that a man in civilian garb rushed into a

San Anton' bar-room several nights after the Geldez place had been closed. It was very late. They said that the man was mad and that he drank, drank, until stupor came. And when he could drink no more the man was heard to mutter:

"Cover them up, my little Dark Eyes—cover them up. For God's sake, cover them up, I say!"

They all knew the dark eyes of the San Anton' valley and they went at once to the place of old Geldez, the greaser—many of them. The moon whitened the sand about, but all was dark inside—dark and silent. It was a low hut with four windows. The three in front were tightly shuttered and ominous. The back window was open, and the shutters were stretched apart. One of them hung lightly on its hinges, and the night wind made it sway and softly creak.

They entered, the fascination of terror was upon them. A human voice would have made them turn and flee. Had a cat purred they would have shrank back affrighted, as if from an uncanny sound. Had it rubbed its furry sides against them in the darkness they would have stood fear-frozen, as if in the clutch of the devil. Curious and uncertain things are those fibres we call nerves.

Truly, they seemed to crawl through the empty bar-room with its two tightly shuttered windows—through another room, where the third window was accounted for. Then the leading man stepped upon the threshold of the last room and looked.

Have you ever heard the scream of a frightened horse?

You will always remember the sound if you have. It is horrible. It is like the sound which the leading man uttered when he looked into the last room of the Geldez place that night.

The open shutter swayed in the wind and softly creaked. A pallid moonbar came through the orifice and moved backward and forward across the coverlet of the bed. Something lay behind in the shadow—something voiceless, yet possessed of gleaming eyes; and even as the first man looked two awful objects were stretched out toward him. Then the shutter creaked again, and the pale moonbeam included the two dark things in its light and the man screamed. Later, when they had gained their breath and nerves back in the bar-room, the leader said:

"I saw them move out from the shadow where the eyes were, and they looked like arms, but there were no hands to them—only stumps—ugh." The man shuddered and gulped down many more drinks.

When daylight came the mad drinker crept unsteadily from the bar-room. It was not until daylight came that the other men ventured back to the old Geldez place. Still afraid, they entered again, and found that they had fled from nothing but the little dark-eyed maiden. Her arms were buried beneath a coverlet and when it was raised, they saw how she had suffered. The dark eyes were closed now, and the arms were still. The men wondered why old Geldez was not there.

Yellow Hair was very happy one morning, because Mulgowan had been with him and petted him again and

again. It was a different looking trooper who reported for duty to the first sergeant that morning. Twelve days had passed since Mulgowan lingered on the picket-line, whispering to Yellow Hair and looking backward toward San Anton'. In the orderly-room, where the troop books were kept, a dirty word was written opposite his name. In the little volume containing army regulations, words are printed to this effect:

"Any soldier deserting from garrison or field will be accorded such punishment as the court-martial may direct. In time of war this punishment shall be death."

Mulgowan had come back to the troop in the night. Just after reveille he had reported to the first sergeant, and the troop commander had placed him at once under arrest. Mulgowan spoke no word to his old fellows. Oh, how we wished we could help him. There was no joking at mess that morning.

Anybody can tell you what happened after reveille and before stables. A corporal and two privates of the main guard were sent over from headquarters. The boys who loved Mulgowan were out in the troop street, watching while they placed him under arrest. Had they been anything but good soldiers, and had they been anywhere except in Uncle Sam's army, the arrest of Mulgowan would never have taken place.

"Escort this prisoner to the guard-house," the troop commander ordered.

Mulgowan stood at attention and spoke no word.

The two privates of the main guard brought their car-

bines to the position of port arms, and stood five paces behind the prisoner. The corporal saluted the troop commander and said, "Forward, march." The corporal's voice was husky. He was not pleased with his task.

Mulgowan seemed not to hear the command. It was repeated.

"Wait a moment," the prisoner said. He stepped over to the picket line, where Yellow Hair was tethered. The two talked together for a moment. The guards watched.

Then Mulgowan was led away to court-martial.

And the fancy little gelding, Yellow Hair, whinnied often in the days that followed and pawed the turf.

The Voice in the Fourth Cell.

THE VOICE IN THE FOURTH CELL.

Back from the coast and high among the hills is the little village of Manati—hid away among the hills of white rock on the island of Porto Rico. When the great guns stormed and roared in the harbor of San Juan, fifty miles away, only the faintest reverberations were borne back to this tiny village. When the white Sibley tents of Uncle Sam's soldiers dotted the rolling land outside the town, naked children played in the streets and men and women starved just the same in the prison.

There are thick mahogany bars on the fourth cell of the Spanish prison at Manati. Look through them to-day and in the half-light you will see two very wonderful eyes. There are no such eyes back in the States. You may find orbs like them among the fairest of Spain's fair women, but few will there be so depthless, great and dark.

They speak, laugh—they charm you so that you can see naught but them. You cannot tell whether it is the expression of knavery or the spirituelle light which charms you more. You pause before them. If any Spanish comes to you that moment you will speak. Then gradually in the dimness you will perceive the rest of Juan Tosto's face.

It will please you. No countenance could be vicious or ugly with such eyes. You will not wonder at the sunken cheeks, or at the drawn, bloodless lips, for all Spanish convicts slowly starve. Pass on, you must.

Then in a moment, you will hear strains of weird, hushed melody. It is like the dream of a pure conscience, so sweet, so ethereal, so appealing; close your eyes and you will see the great white moon, playing upon the turrets of Spanish castles. You care not to understand the words—so touching is the music from the cell of Juan Tosta.

But we knew the Spanish singer, Silk Redmond and I, before he was starving in the dark cell of Manati prison. When his home was on the great White Cliffs, hanging over the curling, limpid Rio Grande, we met him. There is a Rio Grande in Porto Rico. It is distant from nowhere on the island. Its water is the clearest in the world—like a mountain spring.

Years before Juan Tosta was a slave.

Because he was a Porto Rican those whose veins run with pure Castilian blood, would have called Juan a mongrel. Strange to an American are these people—so mild and harmless are they. The finer feelings of life are not unknown to them. They live in a land the capabilities of which are incalculable, yet they die in their youth—die not from disease, but in the slow agony of wasting limbs, in the low fever of hunger unappeased.

Centuries of oppression have made them a timid people. The rich Spanish planter was their master once.

To-day they are trying to realize that Americans pay wages for labor.

The last words of dying Spain were a declaration of peace. American soldiers are quartered in old Spanish garrisons, and American gunboats peer majestically into what were once Spanish cities. Senoritas are singing "After the Ball" in all Porto Rican towns. All things have been remembered.

Yet detachments of Uncle Sam's horsemen are scouring the hills for dark little men with bare feet and haggard faces—for men who have long known that war is no more, and whose wives and children are passively starving in the coast cities.

Do they hate the cavalrymen who are daily running them down? Yes, just as slaves of other days hated the lash. Ah, but they hate the rich Spanish planter much more, even as the slaves hated him who held the lash.

Why was it that skeleton companies of Americans routed whole regiments of Spanish soldiers? Because these dark little men with bare feet and haggard faces were in the ranks. And why were they there? Because they were nothing but poor Porto Rican mongrels, and their masters, the full-blooded Castilians, drove them to it.

And these same little men in those few months felt a sensation which their fathers never knew. The American feels it, trembles under it, glories in it.

It is the sensation of conquering fear.

They saw that the pale-faced Castilian was not king of

the world, and they quivered in the thrall of a mighty thought. When it was no longer a thought but a consummated action, these dark little men were deserters, infesting the great white cliffs. And the Porto Rican women were awed by deeds of such daring, and at night, behind bolted doors, they whispered words of praise for such heroes.

And they also taught their naked babies to say, when Uncle Sam's soldiers passed by:

"Mericano mucho wano!"

And so well did the tiny, dark-skinned youngsters learn the lesson that in a few days the words grew to be a meaningless, wearying sound to the boys from the States.

Meanwhile the deserters made midnight sallies upon the plantations where they once slaved. Yes, and they burned the haciendas. The very dignified name of "guerrillas" became theirs, and the cavalrymen from the States received orders to bring them in dead or alive.

And all these things resulted in Silk Redmond and I meeting Juan Tosta, the sweet singer on the Great White Cliffs.

"We don't want to cart around any prisoners," the sergeant of the detachment said. "The San Juan prison is crowded now. We want to sleep nights, instead of standing guard. All I got to say is don't monkey with the greasers."

The sergeant was an old man. He had soldiered in Texas. We were tickled at the outlook.

A December night, yet you wanted no blankets. Four

men were already sleeping. The cook-fire was a mass of whitened embers. The guard hummed softly and paced about among the horses. Silk Redmond, finishing a cigar, let his eyes wander high among the beautiful mysteries of a tropical night.

When we had slept an hour the sky beyond an adjacent group of hills reddened into a vast lurid expanse. The guard saw it, and in a few moments we all knew that there was game in the vicinity and that it was very much awake.

At dawn we pushed our horses up to the hot, smoking ruins of a big hacienda. The Spanish owner said that for two nights he had heard the songs of Black Stick up in the cliffs—Black Stick, the bold and bad Porto Rican, the very worst guerrilla on the island. He did his work well that night, however.

For ten days we searched every crag and abutment along the high walls of the Rio Grande, from Manati to Ciales. The songs of Black Stick were heard no more, a circumstance which made us understand that the outlaw used his eyes. Then even the small detachment was divided. Silk Redmond and I stuck together. Black Stick was making sleepless nights for the old cavalry sergeant.

And we, why we would have given up future hopes for a shot at him.

Did you ever track a buck for a whole day and then watch him leap out from your very shadow and disappear,

while you forgot that there were such things in creation as carbines, cartridges and venison steaks?

We were very weary, Silk Redmond and I. We were blue, too, and foolish enough to let our minds wander back to the States where our hearts were. We were too weary to make a fire that night. Had we done so, we would not have heard the soul-melting melody of the Porto Rican bandit. A moment or two later, and we would not have heard it, except as angel music in a dream, for our eyes were weighted down with sleep.

We did not move. It was a soothing touch upon our foreheads, like the pressure of a mother's hand. It brushed away the calloused places in our souls and changed us for one memorable moment from cavalrymen into little children. It would have made us feel, had we ever doubted, that there are raptures hidden away in heaven.

The moon shone high upon the cliffs. The rocks stood out in the pallid radiance. The Rio Grande twinkled back at the stars above the gorge and hummed low of peace and slumber. Down from the cliffs there came to us a quaver of enchantment. Then the magic voice was silent. It was:

"Like the last sweet note
From a wild bird's throat,
As off to the south he goes."

Black Stick was untamed still, but he was sad, too, and very lonely. By his song we knew it.

For several moments Silk Redmond's heart was so big that it choked his throat, and he could not speak. This is what the words were, when they came:

"I'm going to pull my freight in the morning and let the poor devil starve and sing himself to death. I wouldn't shoot that chap any more than I would—eat a baby."

The Rio Grande purred and prattled on. It was very dark in the gorge. I reached for Redmond's hand. His was groping for mine. Then we dreamed of great cities and loving white faces in the Northland, while the moon mounted the skies above the gorge, and its white bars played in the depths of the running river.

In the morning, the rest of the squad ran into us.

"Well, what do you know?" the old sergeant asked.

"Black Stick may be in Jericho for all I can tell," Redmond averred hopelessly.

"In my opinion, Black Stick and his melancholy music is all a fake," some one said.

I acknowledged, without choking, that he voiced my sentiments exactly.

We were standing upon the river bank. The cliffs rose high above us.

"Well, that beats the devil," said the old cavalry sergeant. "We are certainly a gang of coffee-coolers."

A great rock knocked down a horse in our midst. It was hurled from the heights. Then came another.

"All a fake," Redmond repeated nervously. Then the sergeant spoke again:

"Ford the river with these horses, Darley. Take positions over there, and don't move your eyes from the cliff. Corporal Mack, take two men and circle to the left. I'll go this way with Redmond and the kid. No nonsense, remember!"

"We'll have to get to him first—if he lives," Redmond whispered to me. And we raced ahead, climbing higher, higher upon the rocks.

Even had I never heard the bewitching cadence of Black Stick's voice on a moon-mellowed evening, no white man could have leveled a carbine at those soft, lustrous, Spanish eyes. And when Silk Redmond and I saw them gleaming from a thicket, we stood erect and gently beckoned for the dreaded outlaw to approach.

His knife was in one hand; his hat in the other, and his eyelids were stretched wide apart. There was a red light in his great, dark eyes, like a distant forest fire shining through a wall of night. It was the light of horror. His dark skin was changed into the ashy gray of a raincloud. Trembling he approached.

Thus was the taking of Black Stick, the terrible, on the Great White Cliffs overlooking the Rio Grande.

Ah, but he was a sweet singer!

The old cavalry sergeant was very happy when he saw the Porto Rican creeping in front of us down the cliffs.

"Why didn't you wing the greaser?" he asked.

"He didn't give us a show," Redmond answered.

It takes a good man to be a soldier. Redmond and I were only recruits. Moreover, we had little hope of ever

being much better. Had we been good soldiers we would have captured Black Stick on the same night we heard his songs. Had we been good soldiers we would have had to carry the bandit's body down the cliffs, instead of allowing him to lead the way.

Strong was the guard that took Juan Tosta, alias Black Stick, to Manati prison. Strong and thick are the mahogany bars which keep him in the dark, fourth cell. The spirit of a bandit is broken within him. Hunger plays sadly upon a man's nerve. And then the bandit spirit is not mighty in the Porto Rican at best.

But his voice is not dead. It is as subtle as the century-old wine in the cellars of the mighty El Alcaldo. It is as sweet as the memory of dear ones far away. And the eyes of Juan Tosta, once a slave, once the dreaded Black Stick, shine with the light of a living soul when he sings.

Juan cannot understand why we two, who took him from the Great White Cliffs, sit at evening at the mahogany bars of his cell—sit silent, almost breathless, until he sings the slumber song and the bugle calls us back to camp. Juan cannot understand why a warm, gray blanket with a big U. S. in the centre, was given him to sleep upon.

Juan cannot understand why Silk Redmond thrust a trembling hand through the mahogany bars last night, when the slumber song was ended—a trembling hand which grasped his own and lingered there.

Juan Tosta will never know why the two American

cavalrymen took him from the Great White Cliffs above the Rio Grande. He thinks we were good soldiers that day.

And so does the old cavalry sergeant, even if we didn't "wing the greaser."

The Good Which Was in Him.

THE GOOD WHICH WAS IN HIM.

No trooper said that Allen was not qualified to be troop-clerk. He had formerly been a college student. He had influential friends in Washington. Taps had just been played over Cooper, the old clerk. And because the captain picked out Allen to take his place, the boys were angry. The clerkship is desirable in a cavalry regiment, because it relieves a man from all calls and troop duty. Allen might have been a college professor or the son of the President, but among Uncle Sam's horsemen he was only a recruit. And it was galling to see a recruit slip out from his share of hard work. The boys got over it, however, for the new clerk proved to be a good fellow.

As a cavalryman, Allen was athletic and satisfactory. Some way, back in the States, he had never taken pains to show people the good which was in him. As a matter of fact, he was little heard from until the time when Uncle Sam called for men to make soldiers out of. . . . There is a bunch of troopers down in Porto Rico to-day who know that Allen once did a noble thing.

Ten days after he joined the troop another recruit came down from Washington. He was a slender little chap,

with big, pathetic eyes. Soon he became known as Kid, except in roll-calls, when he answered to "Allen, Number Two." The little fellow had nothing to say, but we could all see that he wasn't cut out for a trooper. We knew, too, that he was making a game fight against that overpowering sickness which feeds upon the thoughts of home. The time came when both of the Allens were away back in the mountains of Porto Rico, and, like every other soldier on the island, they dreamed much of their native land. But the Kid brooded, which was bad for him.

Retreat was just over for the cavalry detachment in Ciales. The troopers hung up their carbines and six-shooters, removed their hot blouses, and many strolled over to lounge in the plaza of the tiny town. Allen, the troop-clerk, walked slowly and thoughtfully down to the stables. His bay gelding, Rio Grande, whinnied softly at his approach. The big cavalryman stroked the animal and was silent. Perhaps it was because he was lonesome and heart-hungry that he sought the gloomy stables. A little way off the big river, after which the troop-horse was named, plunged and boomed over the rocks.

The valleys were growing dim with twilight, but high up on the Ciales hill, where the stables were, it was not dark yet. Allen wondered why there had been no mail steamer from the States in San Juan harbor for ten days. His shapely gelding seemed to be thinking about something, too. Perhaps the troop-horse was wondering why there was so much rain up on the Porto Rican hills, or

why the big soldier who petted him was so serious that evening. Anyway, he playfully pushed off Allen's dusty campaign hat with his silky nose, and afterward used the same silky nose to find out what was in the pockets of the big cavalryman's blue shirt.

Dark shadows crept higher and higher up the hills, and the tropical stars grew steady and whitened. Allen wondered if there would be a certain letter for him when the steamer did come in—a letter from an American girl whom he had always thought much about, and whose memory had become a great and dear thing to him since he had been a cavalryman. Somehow, his thoughts did not make him happy, but he whistled very cheerily to help him forget. Rio Grande was playful.

Just then the troop-clerk saw the other Allen sitting alone in the gloom at the far end of the stables. The lad was staring away over the hills toward the Northland. The big fellow approached and peered into the other's face. He saw a strange expression there—the same sort of an expression which he had seen upon the face of another recruit the day before a squad of men were sent out to search for him.

"Are you sick, Kid?" the troop-clerk questioned tenderly. He knew well why the silent lad was staring away beyond the shadowy mountains. He knew the nature of the sickness which was upon him—how intense and unreasoning were his longings, how dark and deep was his suffering. The troop-clerk knew because he had felt and suffered, too, years ago in the first college days. And the

troop-clerk pitied the other Allen, with every bit of his big, warm heart. Only two women knew the warmth of that heart then, and one was the mother.

"Come on up to the quarters," he said, "where it's light and the other fellows are. 'Twon't do you any good to be moping around here in the dark. I've got a good book up in the orderly room. Come on up and get it—come on, Kid."

He caught the lad by the shoulder and persisted gently. Rio Grande whinnied softly as the two passed. Their arms were locked, and the big cavalryman was talking in a low voice. The river boomed in the distance, and the stable guard walked his post.

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It was four days after that when the mail came in from the States. A big bundle of business matter from the army headquarters at San Juan and some Washington dispatches were handed to Allen, but there was no letter from the American girl. With an angry burning in his throat and a heavy burden in his breast, the troop-clerk sorted the pile of routine stuff. He glanced through one of the Washington communications.

A moment afterward he was covered with a hot perspiration.

Allen folded the dispatch, placed a horseshoe upon it, and then stepped out in front of the quarters to cool off. He heard the rain pounding upon the cliff a quarter of a mile up the trail. The shower was coming closer, closer.

Darkness closed in with the storm. The other Allen sat silent and sad-eyed in the gloom.

"Maybe—she—thinks — I'm — not—worth—writing—to," the troop-clerk muttered unsteadily. The eyes of the lad were strangely wide open.

"Because I'm only a common enlisted man, and because her father is a Congressman."

This moment the troop-clerk looked again at the face of the other Allen. The big cavalryman seemed to forget his own troubles. The other was only a boy. A mother away back in the Northland was yearning for this boy. And his face which the troop-clerk saw in the gathering of the storm and night—well, it told of a heart which was slowly breaking.

Two lips closed very tightly that moment. They were the lips of the man who had been a college student once, and whom many people back in the States thought would never amount to much. He was the same big cavalryman who had longed for a letter from an American girl, and had received none.

Looking all the while at the lad, Allen stood very erect, as soldiers are taught to do. Then he swallowed something big and lumpy in his throat, after which he began to whistle loudly. A gust of rain swept through the open door of the quarters, and the sad-eyed soldier moved from his seat and silently sank down upon his bunk.

A half-hour later the troop-clerk said to the top-sergeant:

"An order came in to-night for the Kid's discharge.

His descriptive list was not among the papers, but the dates and place of enlistment are all right."

Allen spoke very quietly. He had been working over the papers for many minutes. The first sergeant looked up from a ten-day-old paper and remarked:

"I'm glad of it. Can't make a soldier out of a homesick young lady. . . . The mud will be knee-deep down at the stables in the morning by grooming time if this infernal rain keeps up—and this is the dry season."

The rain clouds rushed and clamored above the tiny town. The trumpeter of the troop put his head out into the storm, and his bugle screamed the last call a soldier hears at night—the weird, wailing taps.

The next forenoon "Allen, Number Two," with a big canvas roll in his arms, started in an oxcart for Manati, where he would connect by train with San Juan. He was the happiest boy on the whole island of Porto Rico, because he was going back to God's country and his mother, and there was an honorable discharge in his pocket. Just before he had left the quarters Allen, the troop-clerk, had given him a sealed envelope, and said the following in a dry whisper:

"Read this, old man, when you can't see San Juan any longer from the deck of the transport—not a minute sooner. Understand? And write to me all—all about Washington, as soon as you can. . . . Well, *adios,* Kid. Good luck to you."

The same afternoon another bunch of mail was brought to the troop. There had been so much on the delayed

transport that the clerks in San Juan could not sort it all for the first day. One of the private letters which Allen received contained the following paragraph:

"Oh, Jack, it's come! I vowed I wouldn't write you again until papa told me your discharge was on the way. Telegraph when you reach New York, and we'll all meet you at the train. And, say, Jack, put on lots of warm things on the transport, because lots of poor boys have died of pneumonia from the sudden change of climate. I can hardly realize that you are coming back."

Down at the lonely stables that night the shapely gelding, Rio Grande, looked very wise and thoughtful. A certain big cavalryman stood at his head and said many things in a choking whisper. The west was streaked with dark red glory, but it was black and ominous beyond the mountains in the northwest. The swollen river boomed angrily down the trail. And the sentry walked his post and occasionally kicked up straggling bunches of hay closer to the picket line.

"So it was the little woman who got the discharge, and I thought she—was—ashamed—to—write—to—me. . . . Oh, well, the Kid is happy, anyway, and his mother will soon be happy, too. . . . I hope the little woman won't be angry because I did it. The Kid would probably be eating his heart out in the troop to-night if I had received *her* letter the same time as the discharge. . . . But I guess I can stick it out all right. I can stand it all right, if she'll write to me."

The big cavalryman walked back to the quarters, whis-

tling very loudly and trying to forget. And that night the trooper who had once been a college student wrote a long letter to the American maiden whose father was a Congressman. Long after taps had sounded and all other soldiers save the sentries were asleep, there was still a light in the orderly room, and Allen was still writing.

The city of San Juan looked vague and far-away behind the harbor mists. The white walls of Castle Morro were indefinite in clouds of gray. And when Allen, Number Two, could see the Porto Rican capital no longer, he tore open the sealed letter which the troop-clerk had given him. Some of it is here:

"I suppose you wondered how it all came about. We knew how you felt, Kid. We could see that the life was killing you, and, to be honest, I was afraid you might do something to disgrace that town which we both love. And then I would have had to put a dirty word across your name in the troop-books. You couldn't have been happy at home if you went that way.

"You see, I had some friends in Washington, who got a discharge for me, but *I mislaid the descriptive list,* made '17' out of the '7' in the dates, and the discharge was yours. Of course, I couldn't have done it if I hadn't been troop-clerk.

"There were reasons why I didn't care particularly about going home, but I knew what you suffered every day in the troop. Don't feel sorry over this, because I'm tough and can stand 'soldiering' a little longer. Good-by, Kid, and good luck."

The great, silent hills back of old Morro seemed only a deeper azure than the clouds now, but the eyes of "Allen, Number Two," who was no longer a soldier, were too filmy to take in their beauty. The transport steamed on, on toward the Northland.

Every evening for almost a month the fancy bay gelding, Rio Grande, listened to a big cavalryman's confidings and was petted. And no trooper knew the secrets which Rio Grande was told. The troop-clerk attended to his duties as a good cavalryman should. The great, white cliffs were beaten with tropical showers, and the troopers dreamed more and more of the Northland. And down the trail from the stables the big river boomed and tumbled over the rocks.

Allen was very busy when this letter came:

"So you thought I was ashamed to write to you? Ah, Jack, you should have known me better than that. What you did was hard for me, but it was harder for you. I told everybody you were coming home. The mother of the 'other Allen' thinks you are some sort of a soldier-angel, Jack. . . . But I'll write to you—even if you have to stay on that horrid, rainy island for three years."

Allen was very busy when the above epistle came. He was making out the final statements for all the war recruits in the troop, for the official order for their discharges had just been cabled to the island from Washington. His own discharge was already made out, because the name Allen stands among the first on the troop muster roll.

And down in the stables Rio Grande and the other troop-horses pricked up their ears and whinnied softly when they heard the happy shouts of the discharged cavalrymen up in the quarters. And the big river boomed mightily and plunged over the rocks down the trail.

"Suppose," he gasped. "I should grab that salver and dance around the quarters with it."

The Aberration of Private Brown.

THE ABERRATION OF PRIVATE BROWN.

Brown had a faculty of listening while others talked. He was a big cavalryman, and, putting it with studied mildness, he was not pleased with his job. Patriotism was noble once—about the time when the desks of literary editors were deluged with spasms on the Maine blow-up—and Brown had become a trooper ere his unhealthy delirium had pined away.

Many troopers were weeded out by the flies and fever of a Tampa summer camp, but Brown had been one of the tanned and haggard cavalrymen, too leathery to get a sick furlough, and who were among the first American soldiers to view the tropical shore and the mist-hung hills of Porto Rico from the dirty deck of a transport.

And Brown was very unhappy in that land of few birds and fewer flowers. The troop headquarters was in Ciales, away up among the Great White Cliffs. And this night a bunch of cavalrymen sat in the plaza of the tiny town, and talked lingeringly about God's country over in the northwest. The hill breezes were fresh with a shower-odor, and pungent with the perfume of great orange groves, borne up from the valleys. Stars were mellowing

the tropical twilight above the cliffs. Brown was foolish enough to let his thoughts wander back to his native land. Very hurriedly, very carelessly, he had kissed a tall, dark-eyed maiden on the spring night in the Northland, just before he chased off to join his regiment. The memory of that northern maiden had become a massive thing in his brain during the last few months. Below him the Rio Grande tumbled noisily across the Manati trail. Something which an old cavalry sergeant was saying caught Brown's ear this moment.

" . . . Pretty foxy recruit, he was, but dead sore on the service. First thing we knew he was laid up with a bad leg. The doctor was no chump, but he couldn't do a thing for the rook—leg was stiff and swollen. Doc got gray hairs over the case—let the kid pound his bunk for a few weeks, then give him a discharge for disability. As soon as the kid got home he wrote back to his bunkie something like this:

" 'Thread a horsehair on a fine needle and run it under your kneecap. It won't bleed nor hurt much. Shave off the ends of the hair close and go on sick report. The doctor will do the rest. You can pull the hair out when you're a man again—but maybe you want to serve out your three years. Say, my leg was in fine shape the day after I limped out of headquarters with a pained look on my face and a discharge in my clothes. Love to all the boys.' "

Brown's face reflected the glow from the red embers of his pipe that night as he lay upon his bunk. And I,

who was his bunkie, saw that face in the reflection and wondered at the strange expression upon it. The wildness of an idea in his brain caused it. And long after taps had gone the red glow and the strange expression was still upon his face; and from a formless throng of thoughts in his brain there slowly developed a plan, defined, delicate and difficult.

To no man in the troop did Brown speak a word for seven days. When one cavalryman made a remark to this effect at the end of the time, every one thought of it. I alone knew how poor a soldier and how royal a fellow was Brown. Moreover, I was the only one who knew about the maid back in the States.

At reveille roll-call one morning Brown was in ranks but did not say "Here" when his name was called by the top sergeant. There was a vacuum depicted upon his face which showed rare art in its cultivation.

"Brown, when you come to," observed the top, "report to the orderly room."

I never saw a man who could stare so picturesquely at nothing and reflect it on his face like my bunkie could. There were no active comments made in regard to Brown's mental condition until the morning when he refused to get up for reveille. The first call had gone some moments. The troopers were hurriedly dressing. There was no movement in Brown's bunk. The sergeant of his squad saw a pair of dull, expressionless eyes, which drearily followed the movements of the flies on the wall. The face of the man in the bunk was empty and smile-

less. I was sitting near by, looking pained, and my poor friend was saying:

"My brother's wife will be here day after next. Got a telephone this morning. She doesn't know I was all cut up in the war (there, that telephone is ringing again). She said, 'Brown, you're looking bad.' . . . Tell that gentleman at the door that my life was despaired of last night, but that I am now out of danger."

After the sergeant had gone to make the troop-commander acquainted with the affair, Brown whispered to me:

"Say, if you think this is easy, just try it for awhile!"

That night the patient felt the necessity of becoming more active in the capacity of a wild man. The burden of his song—and he hasn't a fortune in his voice—was, "O, beer in the little black bottle, black bottle." It developed in those hours of night that I was the only person who had the slightest control over Brown. It was a touching proof of his friendship for me because I was released from all calls and troop duty and turned into a sort of keeper for my poor friend.

But the strain was telling sadly upon him. For some unaccountable reason the troop commander had not yet reported the matter to the physician, and Brown had only been allowed the luxury of a lucid interval twice in four days. When I was alone with him, he said:

"Here I am as nutty and as noisy as a whole fever ward —have to study all night to get my ravings down pat, and the d—— doctor won't come around to pronounce on

'em. If I'd a'known this thing had to be kept up indefinitely, I'd a' deserted first. Say, it's no cinch to keep the bees buzzin' in your bonnet."

He was looking at me pathetically. There was no humor about Brown.

"I have to keep saying to myself," he went on, dismally, "Brown, you're hivey, you're buzzy, you're supposed to hear noises and look idiotic—and, by heaven, the idea grows on me! Say, bunk, don't you think it would bring the doctor around if I got—er—violent?"

I felt that his suggestion was a good one, but in the capacity of a keeper, I recommended that it be a mild sort of violence.

"Oh, I'll not bruise you up, except when the others are looking," he said seriously.

And he got violent. It was that unreasoning, oh-if-I-could-only-die-give-me-a-knife sort of violence. He would look at me as if to say, "Don't you dare give me a knife." Still the doctor did not appear. After two hours of splendid effort, Brown was hoarse and fagged out.

"Suppose," he gasped, "I should grab that saber and dance around the quarters with it?" He was drenched with perspiration.

"You'd get shot—promptly," I observed. "Here comes somebody! Get nutty, Brown, it's the doctor!"

I couldn't describe that interview. Brown spread himself. He was a poetic dreamer—a maudlin maniac—perfect. The doctor departed with no thought but pity in his mind—supreme evidence that there was no humor in

Brown. A couple of hours afterward the top sergeant called me into the orderly room and said many surprising things.

"Well, what do you know?" asked Brown in a low voice. He was sitting up in his bunk, smoking cheerfully. The ordeal of the doctor was over. His prospects were only cheerful ones now. As the whole troop was out on target practice, Brown was having a lucid interval. The enjoyment of it shone upon his face. I hated to spoil it, but I might not have so good a chance again.

"The doctor says you've got 'em, all right."

"Did he say there were any special or interesting features to my—my derangement?" he questioned facetiously.

"And they're going to send you back to the States," I resumed.

"I guess I'm pretty bad actoring. I guess I won't do." Brown was tickled. Oh, what a shame it was to have to tell him! The troubled look on my face made him say:

"Devilish sorry, bunkie, you can't go along. Honest, you'll never know how much I think of you for the way you helped me out. We were always solid, though, before—before I was taken. Why, confound it all, the only thing I regret is leaving you in this—dam' country!"

It was positively pitiful.

"Don't worry about that, old man," I said, "I'm going with you."

Brown jumped at my hand and declared with a

throaty quaver, "By Jove! if you'll desert, I'm with you, body and soul!"

"Don't boil over so loud, Brown," I said quietly. "You've got your own little game to play—besides, when I quit this man's service, I'm not going to have a French leave to look back on."

Brown was looking more mystified every minute.

"Moreover," I went on, slowly, "you don't think they're going to let a wild man run around loose on a transport, do you? Why, it would be a criminal imposition. You're liable to hurt somebody. You'll be under a strong guard all the way home. Corp. Kennedy and I are appointed your keepers."

As I have said some half dozen times before, there was no humor in Brown. The excruciating refinement of my pleasantries were lost on him. In fact, Brown was dazed and limp. His pipe dropped to the floor.

"I never thought of that!" he gasped.

"The captain has written to your parents concerning your deplorable absence of mind, but we can——"

"Wha-at?" roared Brown. He sat up erect, wild-eyed. And I had been warned to spare him from all excitement.

"But you can write them that your mind is only temporarily webby, and—and I'll sign the statement."

Brown looked at me with pitying scorn.

"Yes, and the folks will say the saddest thing about it all is, the poor boy believes he is perfectly sane. And

I see a pathetic finish for Brown when the maid hears about it—oh!"

"Get leary, old man," I whispered, excitedly, at this moment, "the boys are coming back."

Brown's derangement assumed a suicidal mania at once. Corp. Kennedy was exhausted in the course of an hour through his efforts to keep the patient from doing himself bodily harm.

Now, the corporal was a conscientious man. It was this trait, chiefly, which caused the troop commander to put him in charge of Brown, the much deplored. It would be a long story, indeed, to relate how the Porto Rican children pointed to my poor friend, and then touched their own foreheads, whispering to each other:

"Loco—Americano soldato, loco."

It would be a long, sad story to tell how poor Brown was confined in the rear smoking-room of the transport, and how Corp. Kennedy insisted that either he or I must be awake with the patient all the time. It was a burden of peculiar and crushing weight for Brown to bear, when the sick and discharged soldiers going back to the States would peer through the loopholes of the smoking-room and make remarks such as these:

"Why, he washes his face all right," or "It's a wonder they don't keep him in a straitjacket," or "He's a savage-looking lunatic," and others.

The conscientious manner, too, in which Corp. Kennedy did his duty, had an oppressive and unpacifiying effect upon Brown, whose violent intervals occurred only

when the corporal was on guard. Violence seemed to weary Brown on the transport, and he did not persist in it, except when it was absolutely indispensable. At such times the loopholes of the smoking-room would be crowded with interested faces.

While the big transport was being shoved and locked in pier 22, New York harbor, Kennedy was the busiest man on the ship. A good soldier was Kennedy, and before meeting his superiors at the army building he shaved and donned his finest. I was told to keep Brown under heavy guard until he returned. The corporal said he would send a telegram to the patient's mother.

Passing over the manner in which the patient's discharge was obtained, only one more scene is necessary. Brown braced himself for a last delirium. The corporal must have no suspicion, at least while he was in the States.

"Allow me to wholly manage the matter," Kennedy whispered to me, as the train rolled into Brown's native burg. Our patient appeared placid. By the expression upon his countenance one would imagine that he held both of his keepers in serene disdain.

And a moment afterward Brown was in the arms of a weeping mother. He talked irrelevantly; he smiled a debilitated smile—he was the Brown of illusions—because Corp. Kennedy was there. It was the bravest effort of his life.

And a tall maiden with eyes dark and handsome, yet, oh, so sad—was also there! Brown appeared not to see her.

"It is with much sorrow, madam," Kennedy began. His words were studied. I could hear no more. Somehow the face of that mother and the eyes of that tall maiden—made me feel giddy.

"Excuse me, miss," I began, "but I am Brown's bunkie, and he was my best friend down there in Porto Ric——"

I had planned to explain many things before the secret, but the maiden's eyes told me that her heart was breaking. She knew and felt the truth an instant later and her dark eyes were sad no more.

"The corporal knows nothing," I concluded. "I will get him away, then you tell the mother. Say to Brown that I will see him to-night at 9. It was you, miss, that sickened the boy of the service. The corporal will not be with me to-night."

And the time came when I had to hasten away from Brown's mother and Brown's sweetheart and Brown, because if I had not they would have seen something in my eyes—something that would not have looked well in the eyes of a big trooper.

And on the transport Corp. Kennedy pleased himself with the thought of a difficult duty well done, and I—well, I smoked and dreamed and missed my old bunkie as we neared the tropical shores and the mist-hung hills.

The Last Cell to the Right.

THE LAST CELL TO THE RIGHT.

Nobody knew the real reason why Stanley was so haggard and white, when he came out from the Spanish prison at Bayamon. He had served five days for missing retreat. He certainly was not starved, because they fed him as usual from troop rations. Yet Stanley was a different cavalryman when he returned for duty.

Now, the best of troopers have done time in the guard-house. Some captains use the old Spanish prisons of Porto Rico for guard-houses these days. There is one in Manati, a high interior town, sixty miles from San Juan. I had ten days against me when I was put in there. Why? Well, that story has already been told. At any rate, I only served seven. The other three days and many more were in the hospital. It was what I saw which shriveled up my nerve.

When the realization came to me that it was a physical impossibility to dream away the whole ten days, I looked about. The aspect was not an inspiration. I sat in a small, stone-paved plaza, surrounded by cells, dark, dirty and depressing. There was a well in the centre of the prison yard, and when one walked across the flagging,

his footsteps sounded with a cavernous reverberation in the black water chamber below. The entrance to the plaza was a big iron gate which was open in the daytime and guarded by a Spanish policeman. At sunset the prisoners were locked in the cells, and the plaza was left untenanted save by stray ponies and pallid moon bars. It was in one of those cells that Juan Tosta, the sweet singer of the Great White Cliffs, sang mournful melodies and sickened—Juan Tosta, once the dreaded brigand Black Stick. Every one of those cells has been the abode of living death. Men and women and babies have suffered there in ways hardly conceivable to white people. Tad was born in that last cell to the right, where the stocks are. Tad studied me from head to foot when I first became his fellow-convict.

He had the eyes of the wizened woman who crouched at the door of the last cell. Three years before, without a cry or sound, Tad had filled his lungs for the first time —filled them with the foul air of a prison. An old convict woman told me this. His arms were like any other baby boy's, but if there was ever a voice in his throat it had not yet been used. His head held some kind of a brain. You could see that by his eyes, but Tad never learned to smile.

A garment hung about the brown baby, and about the garment hung the same odor which reached my nostrils, when I ventured too close to the woman who sat at the entrance of the last cell—sat almost hidden behind her gaunt knees. Her lips, her breastless figure never moved,

but everywhere her eyes followed the baby. They were filled with seeming consciousness of that crime which gave him life in a prison cell. They were bright with the staring brightness of fever. Had they shone from a skull wrapped in brown paper they would not have made you shudder more. The father of the infant was never seen, but day and night his moans were heard in the plaza.

There are men and women in Porto Rican prisons who have committed no crime. When families can furnish no home for themselves the province gives them a cell. At 11 o'clock each day the province also gives them a cupful of clay-colored soup, the primary mystery of which no soldier has yet solved. The province does not care if its paupers obtain other articles of food. They are welcome to anything which they can beg on the outside. But when the life spark has become gray and chilled, as in the case of Tad's mother and father—so depleted that they crawl with groans and great difficulty—then they have nothing but clay-colored soup to make their dying longer. Indeed, some paupers have been dying for years upon it. This is a matter of no consequence to the province. American paupers and soldiers have an enlightened habit of eating three times a day. They are unlike the Porto Rican in this respect.

One's bones need little food. When all one's muscles are attenuated and dried into stiff, brown cords from eating clay-colored soup, then one's stomach ceases its painful gnawings at a vacuum. Tad's mother was like this. His father was not yet in that condition. You could tell

that by his moans. I observed all these things during the first day. It tended to create within me an aversion for government straits.

A woman walked slowly through the iron gate at the prison entrance. She was smileless, hungry-eyed and silent. A large tin can was balanced upon her head. Her fleshless figure was marked with none of the curves of a woman. Her feet were bare; her movements slow and painful. Tad approached her. From a pocket in her dress the woman produced a green orange—natives eat oranges while they are green in Porto Rico. Still silent and smileless she handed it to Tad.

Over by the entrance to the last cell, the mother crouched and stared. There was madness in her eyes, but she did not move. The man moaned inside. At the well the other woman slowly and painfully filled the can. The descending chain made a weird, cavernous rumble, as it beat against the slimy stone wall of the black water vault. Kneeling upon the flaggings, she placed the can upon her head and was gone. Tad poked his hand through the rind of the orange and crept toward his mother. Her eyes stared at him with an intensity I shall never forget. I see those eyes to this day. They seemed to bring the child to her. Suddenly her black skeleton hands shot forward toward the orange, but Tad eluded her. Still she crouched motionless, but her mad eyes followed every movement of the child.

"Cannot these people speak?" I almost cried. My terror was unaccountable. You will see life rank and naked in

a Porto Rican prison. It is bared of all tinsel wrapping. You will see how the slow suffering of hunger unappeased depraves the human mind—how one wolfish thought creeps into it and stays. You will shudder in horror at the sight.

At sunset the Spanish policeman locked my cell and the others—all save the last one to the right. The woman was still huddled at the entrance, while the twilight was deepening—and the man moaned inside. I saw no more of Tad that night.

Did you ever hear a cat step on dry, brittle leaves? It is just such a sound as this which numerous cockroaches make when they crawl across a stone floor. It will keep you awake. If you are alone it will make you sit erect, and things will become distorted in your mind. Your eyelids will stretch wide apart. The darkness will seem shadowy. There is always darkness where cockroaches are. The shrill, snarling "peak, peak," of ravenous rats can be borne, but the clicking rattle of cockroach hordes is maddening. Behind shut lids you will see black spiders dangling before your face. A strong pipe will sooth you some.

I was glad when the ashy moonbeams darkened in the plaza and the dawn settled down. The trooper who brought breakfast over from the quarters said my face was white. I could well believe it. As I lifted a can of coffee my hand trembled. The sight of Tad sickened me. I placed the tin plate of bacon and potatoes upon the flagging and kicked it toward him. No sound reached

me in the cell, where I disappeared for a moment. But when I returned the plate was empty. Tad held a potato in his two brown hands, and it struck me that he looked significantly across the plaza at two convict women. His mother's mad eyes were riveted upon him. The man suffered inside.

Then the fleshless form of the water-woman swung slowly in through the iron gate. She filled the big jar and was gone—silent and smileless as a spectre. My nerves were twitching—my head ached. It seemed as if I were becoming dumb and inhuman—like these natives. Night must come again. The thought haunted me with shuddering dread. I dared not tell any soldier what I suffered lest he should laugh, having neither seen nor felt what I had. The sameness of it all, the silent suffering of the woman, the moanings of the man from the darkness, the filth, the vermin—all tortured me. And every hour of the growing day was a ruthless warning.

In the cavalry service men from the ranks have to bury the dead horses and mules. I performed a ceremony once in a hot country over the remains of a government mule, four days gone from the glanders. I did not volunteer for this duty. It was thrust upon me. I remembered that task the second morning in Manati prison, when I administered unto my little fellow-convict a scrubbing down with government bouquet.

This was necessary. Not so much for the furtherance of Tad's comfort as for my own. He was hourly decreasing the interval between us. He seemed to like the

American soldier. He was mightily attached to the white potatoes of the American soldier. In order that I might be comfortably chummy with the brown baby the duty devolved upon me to give him a thorough grooming.

First I cut down an army undershirt into a sort of ulster for my diminutive friend. He watched me soberly. He still held part of the potato in his brown hands. His face was smeared with it, the result of a peculiar process of absorption. I then rolled up my sleeves, put a heavy charge into my pipe, and recklessly cut off Tad's garment, which was so crowded with associations.

Tad tolerated the idea. The soldier who gave him big, white potatoes was entitled to some consideration. I had often wondered why his slate-colored hair grew in patches. I ascertained the reason. It must be imagined. With a box of matches I succeeded in changing his former garment into ashes. Tad was finishing the potato, while I sweated for several reasons, the heat included. With the most trying part of the task over I turned to the soap and the brown baby.

Such a shock I received that moment can never be adequately expressed. From motives of charity and others I had undertaken to scrub the child down. Well, all I can say is that I did it very hurriedly and with averted face. As a matter of fact, I beckoned to one of the convict women and made her finish the job. I gave directions at a modest distance. Tad was allowed to dry in the sun. SHE was as shiny and rosy after the operation as only Porto Rican babies are. The mother, crouching

at the entrance of the last cell to the right, viewed passing events with eyes that silently raved. And the water-woman strode silently in and was gone with her burden.

The little girl baby was my comrade after that. She forgave the liberties I had so unintentionally taken. She allowed me to trim her finger nails. Baby hands, even if they are brown, are cute things and well worth studying. All my efforts failed to bring forth from her a word, a smile or a cry.

Dinner was brought over, and we sat down upon the curbing of the well, Tad and I. The baby thrust her fingers into the mess tin and drew forth a potato. I drank coffee—my stomach revolted at more. Suddenly something crushed its way into my nostrils. Violently sickened, I looked about. The mother of the baby was upon me. She had crawled from the cell door to my feet. I placed the mess tin upon the flagging and fled to the far end of the plaza. Tad sat on the well curb, busy with the potato. The man in the cell moaned louder, and drops of water from the brimming bucket fell into the black tomb with a cadence deep and dreadful.

The bright day waned. The gloom in the cells deepened. The gaunt, smileless water-woman came no more. Over in the troop quarters the first call for retreat sounded. The Spanish policeman stood at the door of my cell. He smiled and beckoned. God only knows what I would have given to answer retreat instead. I tried to smile, but the impulse was strong within me to strike him. The

woman at the last cell moved her horrid eyes toward me as I entered.

And so five days passed—five days in which I became aged and unmanned—five days in which I atoned for all my sins, past and to be. And all the while Tad became more and more like a child which is fed, and the white army shirt which she wore for a gown grew darker, like the one which was ashes. And all the while the fleshless water-woman swung in through the iron gate and carried her burden away. And the man was never silent, and the mad-eyed mother changed not.

The sixth evening I clung to the trooper who brought supper to me. I spoke no words—only clung to him. Fiercer than ever the temptation besought me to strike the jailer down as he smiled and beckoned after the call for retreat had sounded. I tried to sing, but my voice was hoarse and broken. I could not smoke, for I had not eaten. The darkness was moving with shadows.

I cannot tell the time it all happened. It is horrid for me to think of it now. There was the scream of a child. I never heard the voice before, but it was from Tad's throat! An instant later the black tomb below the flagging was filled with cries—but they did not last. I sprang to the bars of my cell ere the sounds had ceased to vibrate in the dark chamber.

And in the white moonbeams of the plaza I saw the mother of the baby girl crawling slowly from the well curb toward the entrance of the last cell to the right.

And that moment as I looked something snapped in my

brain. During the many days which followed in the hospital I saw the gaunt, smileless woman filling her can at the well. And often the black tomb below her would vibrate with wailing echoes.

There is a small room in the troop headquarters now at Manati which the captain ordered to be set apart for military prisoners.

"Watch out for Mint Julep Kid," mumbled poor Fogarty.

The Fever's Fifth Man.

THE FEVER'S FIFTH MAN.

Fogarty was the heaviest and most depraved man in the troop. Moreover, he had the reddest face I ever saw with one exception—a man connected with political adjustments back in my native burg. Maybe I wrong Fogarty. It depends upon the point of view from which one scans depravity. Briefly, his faults were these:

He terrorized recruits. Following each pay-day, he flirted with serpentine combinations until broke. He was utterly devoid of reverence or moral conception. He cursed incessantly, executing weird flourishes and introducing innovations of the most nerve-shriveling nature. Scientists would have called him a study of degeneracy. Cavalrymen deemed him only superficially depraved because he threw away money and loved his horse. Mint Julep was the horse's name.

Now, I was a recruit and in Fogarty's squad. No man or boy is a rational being during his first month in the cavalry service. Veterans say their marked success in life is due to it—or their failure. A recruit has much to learn, but first of all he must overcome the if-mama-could-only-see-me-now expression his face is

prone to assume. He learns that it is unprofitable to expatiate upon the rich appointments of his residence far away, and upon the princely salary he threw up. He learns to grin while his trousers are sticking to his legs, because they are chafed and bloody from bareback riding in the bull-ring. He learns that the U. S. commissariat does not supply pie, silken hose or scented pillows. He learns the peculiar devilishness of Southern army camps in sultry weather. He learns to eat flies and other strange things—and to eat them in vicious sunshine. He learns what a terror the rainy season is for one who can't get out of it for several reasons. He learns to chew holes in his tongue when a superior officer calls him a disgrace to his country and other expressive things. He learns how insignificant it is possible for a human atom to be. He learns to laugh at the whole business and write home how strong and happy he is.

Some recruits never get rational. They take things seriously. They mutter "God help me," and bad things about wars and armies.

I enlisted about the time poems on the Maine became unpopular. Fogarty applied a system of ghoulish torture to make me miserable. I concluded that he was a cunningly-constructed object for my hatred, and that his heart was packed in ice. What I concluded about army life in general I kept to myself, thereby scoring a hit.

One evening I won a foot-race and found myself a friend of Fogarty's. Old soldiers are fond of physical demonstrations. He was in my set of fours in troop drill

the next morning. Naturally, my horse had it in for me, because I was only a tilty, trembly recruit, and the bridle did not fit. Several officers had already directed stereotyped call-downs at me. The troop halted for a moment while horsemen formed on our right. We stood at attention—very properly—all except Fogarty. To my bewilderment he slipped down from his mount, deftly and quickly tightened my bridle on both sides of the curb, and stepped over his horse again, whispering:

"Give me a chew tobacco, Kid."

He had risked reprimand to do me a good turn, and the ice packing which I pictured about his heart oozed out of my mind forever.

We were on the skirmish line together, crawling up the drenched hill in front of Santiag', Fogarty and I. We heard the droning death-whistle which is thrown from Mauser barrels, and saw the punctures which the whistling things made in roots and sand and in soldiers. We turned our faces up when it rained, and gaped like lizards do. We tried to cough out sand which caked in our throats. We propped up our heads with empty canteens when neck muscles collapsed. We burned our hands on the barrels of our own carbines. Cartridge-belts burned our waists. We did not mind any of these things.

We knew nothing—felt nothing but the heat. It was the sunshine that we cursed at huskily—the terrible sun of Cuba. It put a throbbing weight in our heads. It made us laugh. It bound our limbs. It mixed the stifling smoke of powder with the steaming, choking stench of the

ground. That stench, which the sun made, is fever. It filled our stomachs, our lungs and our brains.

When the command "Rest" was heard along the firing line, I used Fogarty's mess plate to pile up the sand in front of me. Mine was thrown away. And when it was night I smoked half of Fogarty's last pipeful, and after that I rolled over on to half of Fogarty's blanket. Mine was thrown away.

"Thank God, we didn't get punctured this day," I muttered. It was night, and silent about. The Red Cross men were busy.

"I'm too tired to give a dam, Kid," said Fogarty.

A couple of days later I awoke in the morning feeling stiff and tired. We were encamped about the city. At noon my face burned and I did not answer mess call. I wanted to sleep. At 4 o'clock Fogarty felt my cheeks.

"I'll tell the top-sergeant to let you pound the bunk awhile longer," he said.

The next day I was in the hospital, feeling hot and thirsty and hungry, all at once. The air in the hospital tent was full of groans and the odor of drugs. It was also stifling. The boys about me had felt the weight of a locomotive concentrated into a Mauser rifle ball. To me Fogarty said:

"Kid, you've got the fever."

After that I didn't see him for six weeks, because I was sent back to the States on a hospital transport. I had reached the furlough stage, which means that delirium was over, and that my fever had flickered out, leaving

only half of me and a disreputable appetite—when Fogarty came. I had no clothes to go on furlough with—nothing but a tattered shirt and a debilitated pair of cavalry trousers; and the worst of it was I could not get any.

It is not hard for me to recall the events of that night when Fogarty came. I was watching the Red Cross men unload a hospital train. A procession of stretchers was passing from the cars to the fever-tents. Some of the sick men had been forced to walk. Had I not seen others staggering through the twilight, I would have said that Fogarty was drunk again. He dragged a huge blanket roll.

"Kid, where's the rest of you?" he questioned weakly.

I really embraced him that night—Fogarty, the profane, the red-faced. And when he told me that he had brought along a bundle of my clothes from camp, I could not speak, for my voice-cords were numb. I only whimpered. Fever leaves one childish-weak, you know.

Fogarty had lugged along my things with his own—and he a sick man. He had remembered me after six weeks—remembered me, who was only a recruit. I tell you, gentlemen, there are men in Uncle Sam's cavalry.

That night Fogarty stretched his great body out on a mattress—a real one—for the first time in two months. His feet protruded through the iron rods at the lower end of the bedstead.

"Are those women going to be here?" He pointed to a couple of nurses. I nodded.

"Why, it's a cinch to have the fevers here, ain't it, Kid?"

His tongue was dry like it was on the Cuban hills that day. A beam of the low, white moon looked in through the flap of the tent and rested on Fogarty's hands. It made them seem pallid, but his face was very hot and red.

An ugly fever is typhoid. It chars one's brain and body with slow flame. It stretches the eyelids wide apart. In the middle of the day it glows to a white heat. It turns one into a helpless animal, that feels only an incurable thirst and a craving stomach—an animal that moans for ice water when the nurse is busy wrapping up a dead man in the next cot—a staring-eyed animal that knows there are such things as home and friends and death, but cares not. Listlessly he watches a companion fall into that chilled sleep.

Typhoid plays with four men and gets earnest with the fifth—fatally earnest. The moon was high when I left Fogarty that night.

A couple of weeks later he looked at me hard one morning. It was going badly with him.

"Why in the devil don't you go home?" he asked tenderly. It wasn't like the old Fogarty's voice.

"Haven't got a furlough yet," I said, lying. The papers were eight days old already. "Haven't got a hat, either," I continued. I had been wearing Fogarty's. Mine was lost.

"Take care of this 'dough' for me, will you, Kid? I didn't have time to blow a dam red. It gets my nerve with this thirst."

He gave me his last month's pay. Fogarty was getting hot, and the nurse pushed me away.

"Keep the hat you got on, Kid."

I could barely hear his voice. His face was not very red now. How I wished he could see the pain inside of me for him. "Keep the hat you got on, Kid. I'll get another if I don't croak.'"

The doctor hung around Fogarty's cot the next night. The nurse had drawn a chair close to him. I held a lantern near. The rain clouds were venting themselves outside.

"Watch out for Mint Julep, Kid," mumbled poor Fogarty. He was not looking at me. His eyes stared at the sleeping flies on top of the tent. His eyelids were far apart.

"They'll be good friends—Julep and the Kid—both dam good fellows. . . . Nope—not drinking a thing—sworn off—ask the Kid. Oh, I forgot; the Kid's gone home to his mother—got sick, you know—nice little chap, the Kid—make a good soldier. Gone home—way up North—to his mother."

The nurse fanned him. His eyes still stared at the sleeping flies. The nurse knew then that Fogarty was picked out for a fifth man. Silently she fanned him and watched.

Not long after that Fogarty was mustered out of the service.

And all this is to show how I peered under the veneer, which environment made, and saw a great, warm heart.

The Story of a Cavalry Horse.

THE STORY OF A CAVALRY HORSE.

There was something of pathos in the high, clear whinny which was borne across the meadows one summer morning of years ago. A fancy black three-year-old, trotting behind a shiny buckboard, picked up his ears and answered his mother in the only way he knew. The big man in the buckboard was a professional horse-buyer for Uncle Sam's cavalry.

"Scream again, my young beauty, while you've got the chance," the man said. "You'll soon be far away from these meadows and the old lady over yonder who calls to you."

The horse buyer looked back at the shapely gelding. His experienced eye took in the wide-distended nostrils with their crimson lining; the large, intelligent eyes as dark and deep as a starless ocean. The man in the buckboard saw again the easy grace of the colt's stride, the power and elegance of his flat, thin limbs, the arched beauty of his glossy neck—and he chuckled at his bargain. Faint and far-away was heard the neigh of the mother back in the meadows. The colt plunged a little, whinnied nervously, and trotted on.

There are two kinds of recruits in the cavalry service—the horses and men. Both must be instructed in the primary mysteries of drills and bugle-calls. Both suffer during the first days, but gradually the unvarying system becomes grafted into the very nature of the trooper and his mount. They need only to be parted from the life for a little while to learn how dearly they love it. Here is the story of a wild, irresponsible colt, whose brain was full of mother and meadow memories, and who became Sheridan, the pride of a Black Horse troop. In many ways it is the story of any cavalry horse.

Long after he became the joy of his master and the envy of every other cavalryman, Sheridan still remembered those dark, awful days in the corral. Every good trooper knows that a horse can suffer mentally, and that a colt is like a child, inasmuch as he does not forget his mother and his first associations in a day. And when a big cavalryman is seen to pet and cheer a lonely, trembling stranger on the picket line, you can usually judge that he is a good soldier and a man with a human heart.

There were many nervous youngsters in the corral where the black three-year-old was turned loose. Many of them snorted wildly and stood at bay when a man approached. The pretty gelding with soft, jetty eyes—the little heart-hungry three-year-old—was soon to learn what made the other horses so wicked and fearful.

There was the curling swish of a lariat, a sickening jar from the taut rope—then the black gelding fell heavily to the turf. One horseman sat upon the trembling animal's

head, and another pressed a biting, burning steel into the glossy softness of his shoulder. For an eternity it seemed to sizzle into the writhing flesh; then again the red iron was pressed against the tenderest skin under the mane. After that there was weakness and nausea and the wounds gradually healed into the mark by which every cavalry horse can be distinguished. "U. S." is what the letters read.

Then followed the week's ride to the regiment—that stifling ride in a freight car—packed flank to flank so that there would be no injury from the jolting of the train. Oh, how the unhealed shoulders rubbed and burned! The black gelding's limbs stung with weariness; his tongue was shrunken and dried from thirst, his whole body craved for hay and grain. The tightening lariat, the burning steel, the killing ride—all helped to create in the brute mind a lasting horror toward human kind and wicked thoughts. Is it any wonder that some troop-horses are painfully slow in giving their trust to the cavalryman who grooms and cares for them?

But the glossy three-year-old was not ruined by the suffering of those first days. Perhaps it was a perfect balance of mind, which the old lady back in the meadows had given him, which caused the black recruit to suffer and be gentle still. There was wonderment and fear in those great, dark eyes, but no sullen hatred lurked there. The shapely youngster staggered out into the clear daylight, trembling for the events which another day might bring, yet hoping for brighter things. A detachment of

boys in blue led him away to the Black Horse troop, and his life in the cavalry service began with a deep, delicious drink at the watering-trough and a nosebag full of fresh grain.

Old cavalrymen are not always charitable to a recruit. Old cavalry horses are never hospitable to a stranger on the picket line. If placed at a distance, he is only regarded with distrust; if placed within reach of the heels of the veteran chargers—well, the stranger will kick back if he is spunky enough. Friendships are mighty on a picket line, but they are not molded in a day.

"Ah, you're a trim little black baby," said a tall trooper close to the ear of the dark stranger the first night. His words made the colt very happy. The cavalryman gently slapped the glossy breast. "There is blood in your veins, my little man; and your eyes are as black and bright as a squaw maiden's. Why, your chest sticks out like a game chicken's! Quit breathing on my neck, youngster. Don't you know that isn't polite?

"By jove, I like you, little black man! Do you suppose you're heavy enough to dance around the parade-ground with a big fellow like me on your back? If you were mine, I'd have your black sides shining like a piece of oiled silk in ten days. Whoever taught you to go nosing about a fellow's neck and ears? I suppose they treated you pretty rough up there in the corral, but you didn't lose your nerve, did you, kid? Why, you're as gentle as a young girl with her big sister's first baby!

Guess we could serve out an enlistment pretty well together."

It all came about that the new gelding was issued to the tall trooper, and after that he was known as Sheridan in the Black Horse troop. The first thing which any cavalry horse learns is that a certain bugle-call sounds at headquarters twice a day, and that it causes every cavalryman to run for a filled nosebag. Then an officer shouts:

"Feed," after which the filled nosebag is strapped in the proper place. Sheridan learned to whinny expectantly with the others, when the feed-call sounded. But all the calls and army movements were a perfect chaos in the black recruit's brain at first. He wondered why he was left behind in the morning when all other horses, save sick ones, were saddled, formed into platoons and ridden away. Sheridan tried hard to stand quietly when the regulation saddle was first cinshed about him by the tall trooper. He tried very hard to do the right thing and keep his four feet near the turf, when the man mounted. But there was spirit in the black recruit. He would become nervous, in spite of the reassuring whispers of the big cavalryman, and he would plunge and fret when he did not understand.

Gradually, however, Sheridan learned to feel the thoughts of his gentle, patient rider. He learned to wheel at the touch of a spurless heel. He learned to answer the weight of a bridle-rein upon his neck, and from the indefinable sameness of the many bugle commands, there emerged familiar notes to the ears of the black

gelding. Like every other troop-horse, Sheridan's nerves thrilled when the "dash" music burst with a scream from the trumpet.

"Trot," calls the troop commander. The bugle repeats it. A hundred dusty campaign hats are jerked roughly downward. A hundred horses feel a tightening bit. "Sherry" rears a little, but does not mar the beauty of the line.

"Gallop," the bugle plays. The horses plunge high in the ecstacy of anticipation. There is fiery crimson in every wide-stretched nostril. Every trooper's face is covered with dust and moisture. Every trooper's jaws are shut like a vise, and every bridle-arm is as stiff as steel.

"Draw! Saber!" Listen to the rattle of a hundred lightened sheaths. Watch the sweep of a hundred flashing blades. The sun is playing with the sabers. The points are held forward, shoulder high and horizontal.

"Charge!" Like an engine answers to an open throttle, the horses settle down. Flank to flank they leap forward. Madly the men yell. Stirrup touches stirrup. A dust cloud follows.

"As fast as the slowest horse," the officers have often warned.

There is no slowest horse! It is a race—a wild, straining, exhilarating race. The horses bound low. The men feel under them a moveless saddle. Not a head mars the symmetry of the line. It is beautiful, with an awful beauty—this American cavalry dash!

Sheridan trembled for hours after it, even while the tall trooper caressed him.

"Why, Sherry, your gait is a lullaby," the big cavalryman would say. "You dash like a shooting star. You're a born soldier, bright eyes, and the best horse in the troop. . . . No, I haven't any sugar stowed away in that shirt pocket, so you needn't nose for it. Maybe I didn't know a good thing when I picked you out. What have I ever done that you should knock my hat off with your nose. Ah, you're a playful little darkey-joker!"

At the watering-trough Sheridan touched noses with Poncho and made friends. Another day he walked close to the heels of Rio Grande, a long, black-bodied charger, and the latter did not even lower his ears. Again he was tethered next to Cherokee on the picket line, and the two became chummy. The black gelding was a troop-horse now; "one of the fanciest," who knew no life nor desired to know no other than that of the cavalry. The whinny which floated over the meadows that summer morning long ago was only a misty memory. And all the while there grew in the mind of the beautiful black a deeper, truer affection for the tall trooper who groomed and petted him.

But men come and go in every cavalry outfit—the horses seldom change. Old soldiers finish their terms of enlistment, recruits come in. Sheridan, every inch for the cavalry, lost his old master whom he loved. He was sought after by each man in the troop—and he tried bravely and sorrowfully to become attached to his new

owner. . . . At times one of his old friends would be missed from the picket line and never seen again. Was there to be an end to this breezy, beautiful life?

The sun of a Tampa summer faded the black gloss from Sheridan's back, and every other animal in the Black Horse troop was hued like the shoulders of a preacher's old coat when that summer was ended. But Sherry was mighty still. Not one of the six hundred horses withstood better the horrors of the transport during an eleven days' trip from the States to Ponce, Porto Rico. Where the lower tier of horses were kept, the air was heavy with death. The cavalrymen, half mad through weariness, threw pails of salt water upon the drooping horses. The eyes of the animals were filmy and half closed. Many sank and moved not again until the hoisting gear raised them up through the hatches, suspended them over the vessel's side, and the rope was severed. And the cavalrymen, who loved their horses, watched them silently as they dropped into the tropical sea. Troopers can live through such a trip, and feel only achings in the head; but no horse has the vitality of his rider.

And Sheridan, no longer a four-year-old, climbed the muddy hills of Porto Rico's interior, as strong of wind and sure of foot as any native pony. Other horses choked and died of pneumonia, caused by the endless rain, but Sherry stood upon his feet in the daytime and whinnied when the feed-call sounded. Sherry did not know that his best days were spent.

At last there came a morning when many new horses

were brought to the troop headquarters. Something pained pitilessly in the brain of the splendid old charger when he saw his master studying and stroking the limbs of those recruits. After that Sherry had no master. For a little while he was used for recruits to practice upon.

"Old Sherry wouldn't hurt a baby," the first sergeant would say to the embryo cavalryman. There were no more pettings; no more sugar during those last days in Porto Rico, but deep down in the heart of the old black gelding there was a hurting wound. The soft dark eyes were wise and mild still, but at times they would seem to fill with shame and sadness.

Sheridan could not keep back the weight which the years brought, nor the stiffness which came from the muddy Porto Rican hills. He thought more during those long, rainy days of the mother who had called to him from the far-away meadows. He longed for the first trooper who had so patiently taught him to be a good cavalry horse. Old Sherry drowsed and dreamed of the campaigns when he was the pride of the Black Horse troop—poor old Sherry.

Then there came a sad, prophetic day. He learned then what had become of his old friends, Buster, Cherokee, Rio Grande, Poncho and Mint Julep.

Again there was the crushing weight of the tightened lariat, the red iron and the nausea. "I. C." were the letters which slowly healed upon the shoulder of the old troop-horse now. "Inspected and Condemned," is what the letters mean. Back to the hated civilian the veteran

of the Black Horse troop must go. Sheridan was auctioned off for "what he would bring." Oh, the shame of it!

No cavalry horses are ever brought back from Porto Rico. A rich Spanish planter led the old black away from the life he loved. Over the muddy hills was borne the bugle call for feeding. Sheridan raised his head, whinnied and looked back. The Spaniard pulled at the halter, and the old troop-horse—no longer—obeyed as he had always done.

There were only a few days more. The morning dawned when Sherry did not regain his feet. His soft, dark eyes seemed to linger upon other scenes. There was something unreadable in their misty depths. His old friends, the life and the trooper whom he had loved—all were gone. He would not touch grain. Even the strength of the mighty Sheridan had left him. No cavalryman stood by to hold that drooping head and to cheer that breaking heart. . . . There was nothing left but the ghost of the old black charger—a ghost with a broken heart.

But in the regulations it reads that old cavalry horses must be condemned and sold "for what they will bring."

A Soldier and a Man.

A SOLDIER AND A MAN

A certain trooper riding through the poverty district of Ciales with a main guard detail, glanced at a native senorita whose features were pretty. Since the senorita glanced back, the trooper smiled, as any other American soldier would have done. It was only the smile of a second on the part of the soldier, because there was something about the face of the red maiden which was like the scratch of a pin upon the naked nerve. The next day when the main guard was relieved, if you had questioned the cavalryman concerning the circumstance, he would have remembered it with difficulty, because it made no impression.

But the red maiden did not forget. At the moment, the smile of the soldier was a thrill to her, and in the night it became a dream, and the next day it was a memory—restless, imperious, passionate.

Her name was Eulalie. If she ever had another, she did not remember it any more than she remembered who her father and her mother were. Nor would she have cared had not the other senoritas in the poverty district reminded her day after day that her family was a nameless thing. Because the other senoritas were at least posi-

tive on the point of their mothers, they delighted in nursing the torrid venom which was in Eulalie's nature, through their indelicate suggestions.

There was another thing, however, which hurt her far more cruelly than the biting words of her little red sister maidens. It was the same thing which jarred upon the nerves of the trooper, who rode by with the main guard. And since the American cavalrymen had been quartered in the old Spanish barracks at Ciales, where Eulalie lived, she had truly learned the horrid pain which was her misfortune.

There is majesty and ardor and romance in the dark Spanish eyes of the Porto Rican senoritas, but their teeth are imperfect, and this is because the rain-showered hills of their native land are full of sugar and acid. The sweetness is drawn up in the stalk of the cane and in the shaft of the cocoa-palm, and the acid is absorbed by the orange and lemon trees. The combination has spoiled the smile of many a red maiden, and caused tooth-ache remedies to rank next in importance to quinine in the chests of the regimental surgeon-major.

When Eulalie was a very little girl there had come to her a deeper affliction. She remembered very little about it now—hardly anything except that a dark-faced fellow had struck her, and then kicked her afterward, because the hand which he had used was bleeding. After that there was a dark hole, where Eulalie's two front teeth should have been. Perhaps the little red maiden would never have cared had not the American cavalry-

men come to live in the old Spanish garrison, which was only a little way from the poverty district where Eulalie slept at night.

In truth, she might have married Manrique Robles, the ox-driver, and lived in a little shack on the Manati trail, but there was much of garlic about Manrique, and much of ill-temper, as the scarred flanks of his steers would testify. Besides, she had seen the big, white cavalrymen who came from the Northland, and she hated Manrique when she noticed how polite he was to them. Besides, some of her red sister maidens had harkened unto the strange language of these white horsemen, and was it not whispered that the same maidens had parted their lips for the kisses of the men who spoke this language?

Indeed, she would not marry Manrique, for he was very ugly and very black; and when the Manati fords were high and impassable so that he could not go down the trail with his ox-cart, there was always blended with the garlic about him the odor of white rum, and then Manrique was uglier than ever.

But would the big cavalrymen ever smile upon her? Would she not become—if she refused to marry Manrique—would she not become like Mad Marie who slept in the jail, and all day long staggered about the streets, lugging a half-dead baby, and begging for centavos with which to buy more rum—begging forever? Would the big cavalrymen ever smile at her, when she was so ugly to look upon? Would not the other senoritas tell the

white soldiers that she was nameless? Oh, why was she born so? Why did her sister maidens persecute her so?

"Ave Marie!" Eulalie would mutter despairingly when her mind burned with all these thoughts. Even if she did not know her mother, there was hunger in her heart just the same. Even if she was without two front teeth, there was ardor in her soul just the same. Yes, and there was a rare softness in her cheeks, and little beauty tints that were as faint as they were wonderful. And there was a thrilling sadness in her great, dark, Spanish eyes, and long lashes shaded these tropical gems lest they should shine too brightly. And her hair—Eulalie's hair—ah, it was as dusky as the night in a rayless Rio Grande gorge, and it was as soft as—ah, but there was nothing so soft as Eulalie's hair!

But Eulalie knew only that she was nameless, and that she was ugly when her red lips were parted, for the other senoritas did not tell her more than this. And after the big, white cavalrymen came, every day she cared less for Manrique, and every day she hated herself more, because the soldiers laughed and made love to the other senoritas, but did not come near her. When the moon-beams whitened the hard clay of the plaza, the soldiers strolled up and down, and in low tones they repeated all the Spanish words they knew into the ears of the other little red maidens; but Eulalie was alone, except for when Manrique was very persistent.

And at last the great day came, when the trooper rode through the poverty district with the main guard detail—

and smiled for a single, memorable, rapturous second—and was gone.

* * * * * * * *

Trooper Arden was respected, if not understood. And let it be known that a private soldier is not respected by his fellows without reason. Trooper Arden won the regard of the other troopers in seven minutes, on the hurricane deck of a transport, the second day out from Savannah.

When one writes that Corporal Carey was a good soldier, it does not necessarily imply that he was a good fellow; but nobody ever said that the corporal wasn't game to the backbone. Anyway, the corporal was Irish and proud of the force in his fists. In fact, the whole troop was proud of Carey, just the same as it would be proud of owning the fastest horse in a regiment. Trooper Arden sacrificed Corporal Carey, and thereby attained the respect of his fellows. It was legitimate, and this way:

"Oi could lave you fur dead in tirty seconds," said the corporal, on the hurricane deck, and the crowd lounged closer.

"If I should fight you," Arden replied quietly, "I would be court-martialed for hitting an officer."

"The nerve av him!" jeered the corporal. "If Oi win, Oi'm an officer—if Oi lose, Oi'm a man, and a scrubby little wart at that."

"Then I'll fight you," said Arden wearily, tossing away a cigarette.

In the forward hold of the transport, a temporary hospital had been fitted up. Corporal Carey dragged himself thither twice daily during the remainder of the voyage. And so it was that one soldier gained respect for himself.

But Trooper Arden was not understood. He ate less, slept less, and talked less than any other man in the troop. Six out of every eleven regular soldiers smoke cigarettes. Arden smoked more than any two men in the outfit. For supper he would invariably draw double rations of coffee. When taps sounded and the lights were ordered out, the cups untouched might be seen on the box beside his bunk. At reveille in the morning the cups were still there, but they were empty. If you were in the same squad with Arden, and you happened to wake up in the middle of the night, you would be apt to see the face of the trooper glowing behind a cigarette. He never seemed tired, never missed a call, never complained, never swore—all of which was unsoldierly.

He was lean, dark, and without fear. By his face you would not know whether he had been a preacher or a gambler before his enlistment. He was nervous, but not irritable; reserved, but not impolite; educated, but a good fellow still. On pay-days he gambled. He lost cheerfully, but seldom. He won carelessly. He drank, but you would never know it unless you happened to see him. Arden was a mystery—a mystery with a grudge against himself. Perhaps it was his other life that made him so.

It was Trooper Arden who smiled at Eulalie and turned his head away so quickly, while riding with the main guard that morning. In an hour later he had forgotten. His horse was Palto, the unkillable, whose temper was as rocky as his sinews were tough—Palto, the six-year-old, who alone kept his appetite during the eleven-day transport horror, and who kicked out of pure joy every time a nose-bag was strapped over his white face. Palto had a habit of kicking promiscuously, anyway. He also bit with abandon, but he was solid with Trooper Arden.

Only one thing beside the trooper's smile did Eulalie, the little red maiden, remember the next day; and, strangely enough, this one thing was that the horse which her soldier had ridden was possessed of a white face.

And that evening just after retreat, Arden walked down to the stables just to be alone, and in the twilight he saw queer things.

It was quite dark under the canvas of the stables, and as Arden strolled nearer, he heard sounds soft and low—the sound of words which were strangely sweet. The trooper paused and watched, rolling a cigarette meanwhile. The troop horses were grinding at their oats and snorting the dust of the dry hay from their nostrils. . . . Surely, here was something wonderful! Was there not some one standing close to the white face of Palto, the unkillable?

Yes, and it was a girlish form, and her head was snug-

gled closely into the mane of Palto, the white-faced. And, *Caramba!* The brute Palto was as gentle as the girl herself! Trooper Arden crept closer. The cigarette remained unlit in his lips. Far up the trail the great white cliffs were monstrous gray and gloomy, standing out against the purple of evening. Beyond the stars were growing and whitening. A bunch of cavalrymen in the plaza were singing a song of the Northland.

"*Buenos nochas,* senorita," Trooper Arden said softly. He looked like a different fellow when he smiled as he did that moment.

Eulalie turned. The cavalryman could not see the terror that was in her great, dark eyes. Slowly he approached and placed his hand gently upon her arm. With the other he rubbed the forehead of Palto, the unkillable, talking softly all the while. And gradually there crept into the soul of the little red maiden a joy which was great and new. There was no need to fear, for had not the big soldier smiled? After a little while Eulalie pressed her lips to the soft muzzle of the troop horse; and strangely enough Palto, of reputations numerously bad, seemed to like it.

And Trooper Arden smiled again, and walked out toward the forage-tent, while Eulalie followed. Standing there in the fading twilight, an impulse came to the soldier—an impulse which he had long thought was dead within him. He kissed the little red maiden.

There was something about that kiss which made the trooper reflect. Perhaps his thoughts concerned some

other woman whom he knew before he became an atom in the great blue mass of Uncle Sam's horsemen. Perhaps—but that would be irrelevant! In a moment more he was the man with a grudge against himself, and he uttered this exclamation:

"Ba-ah!"

Eulalie shuddered slightly, though she did not understand. Arden grasped her arm softly as if in apology, and the two walked out of the corral toward the trail. As they passed a clump of low palms, a native emerged. Unconsciously Eulalie shrank closer to the soldier. A second afterward she turned and saw a look upon the native's face which caused her to shudder again. And this time she understood. The native was Manrique, the ox-driver, and he had bowed with abject courtesy to the soldier.

A little later Trooper Arden sank down upon his bunk to smoke and think, and Eulalie hastened away toward the poverty district, where her home was. Ah, but she was a very happy little red maiden that hour! The soldiers were still lounging and humming in the plaza, for taps had not yet sounded. Mad Marie, who begged eternally for the centavos, had attained a state of melancholy inebriation by this time, and was howling in a maudlin monotone in front of the quarters. A couple of native policemen dragged her into the jail, which was also a poor-house, and the soldiers, watching, laughed among themselves. Her child was silent in the woman's arms.

After taps sounded one might have seen Manrique, the

ox-driver, drinking white rum in the café. His face was not pleasant to look upon. And when the café was closed and he could stay no longer, Manrique staggered over to the poverty district of the town and paused in front of one of the shacks. Loudly he kicked the bolted door. There was no reply, and he kicked again and a third time. Then he staggered away toward his own shack on the Manati trail. And as he went, Manrique cursed in a strange tongue.

Everywhere about him was the black shade of a moonless tropical night, and everywhere above him was the white glory of the tropical stars.

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"What in the devil do you call that beast 'Palto' for?" whispered a trooper standing next to Arden at grooming-time the next morning.

Any soldier knows that no talking is allowed at grooming. That is why the man next to Arden whispered his question. Palto, the unkillable, had just damaged the hide of the troop horse nearest. At regular intervals the white-faced was facetious, and he invariably vented it in this manner on any live thing which happened to be near, so long as it was not Trooper Arden. The latter eyed the other soldier curiously for a second, and then answered the question in this manner:

"A woman I used to know back in the States had a habit of calling her dog 'Palto.' "

The soldier who asked the question grinned forbear-

ingly, said nothing further, and arrived at this conclusion:

"Arden is a soldier because some white woman threw him down. He is eating his heart out because he landed hard and cannot forget."

The conjecture was a safe one, but the soldier did not guess that the dog which the woman had called "Palto" and the trooper who smoked cigarettes and drank black coffee while other troopers slept, were both embodied in the one being, who was scrubbing the mud of Porto Rican hills from the hocks of the white-faced.

"Cease grooming!" shouted the top-sergeant. The features of Trooper Arden were a study of grimness as he walked up the trail toward the quarters. That evening Arden smiled for the first time in twenty-four hours when he saw Eulalie cuddling cosily into the mane of his very bad and very bossy troop horse. The unkillable revealed a forbearance which was startling and unutterable. A half hour later when the man and the maiden walked out of the corral toward the trail, Palto whinnied a farewell like the soldier and gentleman he was.

"Adios," smiled back the little red maiden, but Palto did not notice since he had just unjointed several lengths of aft quarters, and landed a scientific double hook against the high-sounding ribs of his neighbor. The sole offence of the neighbor was that he came within reach. Palto always insisted upon having an ample share of the picket line.

No Spanish words were spoken as the two walked

slowly up the trail toward the plaza and the quarters; yet in the mind of each there was heaviness. The man was thinking of the joy and pain of human attachments. In a glance of the red maiden's wonderful eyes as she stood beside him in the falling night, he had seen her passionate soul. He had never meant to play with Eulalie. He knew the wounds and wickedness of such a doing. A woman in the Northland had inflicted such wounds upon her *dog*, Palto—but he had kissed the little red maiden! And that night the soldier knew that he could crush the heart of Eulalie through a careless word or a scornful glance—even as his own had been crushed.

But what did he care—bah! He had lived his life. He would be a soldier now until the hateful breathing was over. He hoped it would be over soon. He was not to blame if his nature became a mass of broken fragments because of the caprice of a white woman. He had lived his life. He could not love—no, it was a hard, a bitter thing to love! Still he could pity. But what did he care? . . . Still—he—could—pity!

Of what was the little red maiden thinking? Of each moment which had been a rapture until she saw the ugly black face and the horrid eyes of Manrique, the ox-driver, glaring at her from a shadow as she walked up the trail toward the plaza.

That night before the man and maiden parted, Eulalie turned her eyes toward the face of the soldier, and her hands were upon the soldier's shoulder. Then Trooper Arden kissed the little red maiden as any other Ameri-

can would have done. And Eulalie, in the greatness of her joy, smiled; but it was so dark that the cavalryman did not see what caused him to turn his eyes away so quickly as he rode with the main guard detail that first day.

Manrique, the ox-driver, skulked in the darkness and brooded, and Mad Marie was noisy up by the quarters.

After taps sounded, Trooper Arden was alone with his black coffee, his cigarettes—and his thoughts. It was late that night before Manrique shuffled into his shack on the Manati trail, and the next day his steers suffered.

In the evenings which followed, Palto, the unkillable, welcomed his master and the maiden down at the stables; and often in dark places the soldier saw a native following him strangely. The face of the native was sinister, even when he saluted abjectly, but Arden did not care to understand.

One day when he was doing a guard in the poverty district, Eulalie watched him shyly from the door-way of her shack. A group of senoritas strolling up and down in the sunshine paused to remind Eulalie that her family was nameless. The trooper pacing his post understood the Spanish words which were repeated by the senoritas, and he caught the significance of the manner in which they were uttered. One of the red maidens showed her teeth, and then pointed to the face of Eulalie, after which all the red maidens laughed loudly. Eulalie grew gray with shame and fled from sight. The trooper understood

all these things, and he was very thoughtful as he paced up and down.

In truth, he had lived his life. He was only a soldier now. He feared nothing, not even himself. He did not fear Fate. Why should he since Fate had done its very worst by him? . . . Still he could pity! And that evening down at the stables poor Eulalie forgot all her woes, because the soldier smiled often; and while he was near her the hunger went out from her heart. A great and good thing is pity. Manrique, the ox-driver, knew it not as he watched the man and the maiden from a shadow.

One morning a few minutes after reveille, the troopers lounging in front of the cavalry quarters stood erect and yelled. The pay-master with a volunteer guard was approaching on the Manati trail. That night the bunks were changed into gaming tables, and many bottles of white rum were sold at the café, and much money changed hands.

Trooper Arden could not lose that night, but the soldiers who sat with him could; and if it ever occurred to them that Arden was "working a system," they did not say so, for Arden was a respected man in the troop. It seemed that night as if Fate were trying to palliate the harshness of her former dealings with this man. His pile grew big, but by his aspect you would have imagined that he was losing steadily. He was the same mystery.

One by one the losers made resolutions for the next pay-day, and dropped out of the game. And when there

was no more playing, Trooper Arden gathered up the *deniro Americano*, which had come his way, handed it uncounted to the first sergeant to keep, and walked out of the quarters. As he neared the plaza somebody crept out of the shadow and followed him unsteadily—but silently.

* * * * * * * *

"He's a wizard," observed one trooper, when Arden was no longer present.

"He has soaked up a couple or three hundred this night," said another.

"And there is suicide stamped all over his face," remarked a third.

"He's the best soldier in the bunch of you," growled the sergeant of the squad.

"And he can make any two av ye sleep the sleep av an innacint baby-girl wid the fists av him."

This last came from Corporal Carey, and it came with decision. At this moment the stable guard dashed into the room.

"Some greaser has cut Arden in the back! He says it's only a scratch, but he can't stand. Come on, you fellows—grab those lanterns!"

The squad-room was deserted in a second, and a half-dozen troopers were double-timing it for the stables. Arden was lying upon the ground with his head against a bale of hay.

"It's only a little puncture," he said, quite evenly. . . . "Say, corporal, reach those cigarette papers from

my left-hand pocket. I can't work this hand. Oh, I'll roll it myself—*gracias muchas!* . . . Give me a light, please."

"Tell me what you know," demanded the first sergeant, striding up.

"The black boy who struck me didn't do a good job—I know that! . . . I was standing at Palto's head telling him a little love story. All at once the brute sniffed and struck at something over my shoulder. Just at that moment I felt the scratch, and a native ducked under the picket-line and dashed toward the trail. Palto took a shot at the fellow passing, but he didn't land——"

A streak of pallor from the lantern rested upon the fallen trooper's face. The first sergeant had two other questions to ask. He wanted to know if Arden was sure it was a native who knifed him. He would not have thought such a thing if it had not been for the pay-day and the winnings. He desired to know also if Trooper Arden had seen the face of the man with the knife. But the whiteness of the soldier's features caused the first sergeant to remain silent, and his thoughts made him look very stern. He detailed an extra guard for the stables, and ordered four privates to carry the wounded man up to the quarters. Then he walked up and down in the darkness.

That night when the troop surgeon returned to the officers' quarters after attending the wound of Private Arden, he remarked to the troop commander:

"That fellow Arden is positively without feeling. He

laid perfectly still upon his bunk and puffed away at a cigarette while I took a foot of stitches in his back."

"It isn't a case of taps, is it?" the captain inquired.

The surgeon did not think so. There were conditions, however. He believed that his patient knew more about what had happened to him than he cared to tell. But he did not divine the true reason why Arden was silent. All the commissioned officers knew that there would be no sleep and much trouble in the cavalry quarters until the native who cut Arden was cold—that is, if his identity became known. They knew, too, that there was a possibility of a young war being started, because it often happens that when troopers are unleashed for an hour they remain restless for days. You could not have made a commissioned officer believe, however, that Arden was silent because he also understood this point.

The fortnight following evinced certain peculiarities. Any hour almost in the long, hot days, Trooper Arden had only to glance out of the big door of the quarters to see a face, the expression of which was a mute prayer that he would live. Eulalie, the little red maiden, was as near his side as she dared to be. The agony of her heart was reflected in the eyes that peered into the cavalry quarters—peered hungrily, hopelessly, for the glance of the soldier who had become her God, whose breath was her morning and her night, whose smile was her heaven!

Had you driven her away from the door-way of the American garrison, Eulalie would have died—after one thing was accomplished. The soldiers laughed at her;

she did not hear them. The other red maidens scoffed at her; Eulalie heeded them not. A native fruit vender standing all day at the corner of the plaza saw that she ate nothing. He tossed a couple of bananas in her direction. She carried the fruit for hours in her hand, not knowing that it was there. She lived for nothing save for the smile of her soldier. She remembered nothing save that he had kissed her!

And all the while Trooper Arden suffered (though you would have to see his wound to know it), and he watched the little red maiden and rolled cigarettes with his good hand and wondered. In truth, life held no joy for him. Sometimes he felt sorry that Palto, the white-faced, had spoiled the work of the knife. He could not help it, if it were his nature to despair silently, smilingly, because he was not the light of one white woman's eyes. No, he could not help that, but he could see every minute in the day a woman's soul through the eyes that watched him from the door-way of the garrison. Trooper Arden could see a woman's soul with all its ardor, hope, desire and despair. He could not love—no, because to him the past was eternal, since it held a deathless memory. . . . Still, he could pity!

And so days grew and became a part of that which is gone; and in none of them was Manrique, the ox-driver, seen in the Ciales café or in the town; but many times the Manati torrent laved the blood from the flanks of his steers as they breasted the fords. And all the while Eulalie watched her soldier from the door-way.

At last the night came when Trooper Arden muttered many strange things and forgot to smoke. The troop surgeon looked at the soldier's wound, and in the same breath he cursed the tropics. He wondered what the patient meant in mumbling continually about a dog whose name was "Palto," but the soldiers who stood near thought that their fellow was dreaming of his white-faced troop horse.

* * * * * * * *

If you ever get a bad cut while you are in the tropics, set your face toward the north at once. If you are a soldier, and your troop commander does not advise you to take a furlough, he is either heartless or inexperienced. Flesh wounds do not heal on white men or horses in the tropics. All troop commanders and surgeons know this now, but they didn't know it in Arden's outfit until the night that the patient mumbled incoherently and ceased smoking cigarettes. And when the bit of knowledge was forcibly thrust upon the troop surgeon, he cursed the tropics, instead of himself. At the same time, he did not think that the patient was in a fit condition to be moved now.

The next morning Trooper Arden opened his eyes, and wondered how he had happened to sleep so long. He would have moved his head, but there was something wrong with the muscles of his neck. He rolled a cigarette with his right hand, and the room orderly struck a match for him. The troop surgeon entered at this moment.

"Do you want to go up north?" the doctor asked.

Arden spoke no word for several seconds. Then he turned his eyes toward the door-way. He saw Eulalie, the little red maiden. He saw, too, the agony and the prayer which was in her great, dark, Spanish eyes. Then he said to the troop surgeon:

"I don't know of any one who is pining for me back in the States. . . . No, I don't want to go—up north!"

An hour later the first sergeant entered the squad-room. Arden eyed him thoughtfully for a moment and then said:

"I would be very glad, sergeant, if you would give me that bunch of money that I left with you the other night."

The non-commissioned officer brought him the winnings.

"Thank you, sergeant," Arden resumed. "Could I see the chaplain this morning?"

Eulalie was at the door-way, and a few minutes afterward the godly man of the regiment was brought to the wounded trooper's bedside. For a time he listened to low-spoken words from the man in the bunk, after which Eulalie was also brought to the trooper's bedside. And gradually there came to her the mighty realization that she was no longer nameless, for did not the interpreter tell her so in her own tongue? And she was allowed to kiss the white soldier, but why—why was this money—this fortune placed in her hands by the chaplain? She would die for the smiles of the white soldier—but

his money—his name . . . The great, dark eyes of the red maiden were stretched wide apart, and the prayer was still in them!

Trooper Arden seemed very weary. He was not to blame because his nature could do nothing but pity now. He had not meant to trifle with Eulalie. He knew the human harshness of that—ah, so well he knew it! But he had kissed the little red maiden. It was only one of the mistakes of which his life was made. He sighed, for he was very weary. He asked a trooper near him for a cigarette, because Eulalie was holding fast to the one hand which he could use. He was glad that he could even pity!

And this was the man whom a woman of the Northland had called Palto, and sent away to be a soldier.

On a night not long afterward Eulalie, the little red maiden, was seen passing by the cavalry quarters at Ciales. Mad Marie was wailing mournfully in the street, and her child was silent in her arms. In one of the squad-rooms Corporal Carey was telling the other troopers what a great fellow Trooper Arden had been. Eulalie passed by a group of senoritas in the plaza. They no longer called her nameless.

Down at the stables Palto, the unkillable, whinnied a greeting to the little red maiden as she approached, and he held his head very still when Eulalie buried her face in his mane. Taps sounded up in the quarters, and still the form stood close to the white face of the troop horse. After the stable guard was relieved at midnight, Eulalie

walked stealthily down the Manati trail toward the shack of Manrique, the ox-driver.

Moment after moment passed as she listened in the darkness by the door-way. And at last she crept in as silently as her shadow on the threshold—as silently as fell the starbeams, which were everywhere!

And the next day, and in the days which followed, the steers of Manrique, the driver, browsed unyoked on the Porto Rican hills and fattened.

THE END.

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